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# THE SPARK

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"From a Spark shall arise a Flame"

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VOL. 2 No. 2

APRIL, 1939

THEORETICAL ORGAN OF MARXIST WORKERS LEAGUE

Labor Donated

## SPANISH SLAUGHTER ENDS

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DALADIER - Product of Popular Front (II)

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TROTSKY, Oehler, Field, Stamm & Co.

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LESSONS OF SPAIN

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THE POPE DIES—

RELIGION NEXT!

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THE STRUGGLE IN AUTO UNION

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the

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The following is a copy of a leaflet distributed at the demonstration against the meeting of the Nazis in Madison Square Garden, Feb. 20, 1939-ed.

"L A B O R P A R T Y"    L A G U A R D I A  
A I D S                      F A S C I S T S

Acting in accordance with the policy of Mayor La Guardia, enrolled member of the American Labor Party, Morris Newbold, Council President, has permitted the labor-smashing fascists to gather in Madison Square Garden so they could lay their plans for future pogroms against workers' organizations and Jews. A similar policy of tolerance towards the fascists is followed by the American Civil Liberties Union, composed of liberals, communists and socialists. Their concept of democracy is something abstract, divorced from real life. Preaching democracy in the abstract, these Liberals, Socialists, Communists WOULD HAVE US FORGET THAT UNDER CAPITALISM, even democratic capitalism, WE HAVE THE RULE OF AN EXPLOITING MINORITY-a dictatorship in essence.

IT WAS SUCH "LIBERAL" TOLERANCE TOWARDS HITLER IN GERMANY THAT PAVED THE WAY FOR THE FASCIST CONQUEST OF POWER!!

Proletarian democracy means democracy for those who work and toil. It does not mean permission for fascist gangs, hirelings of finance capital, to organize freely in order to advocate the suppression of the great majority of the nation-the working class!!

We must not ask Mayor La Guardia or the Roosevelt Govt. to intercede on behalf of the workers to suppress fascist meetings. This same govt. will in the future (it has used troops before to suppress democratic rights) use the same police and troops to prevent us, workers, from meeting. No trust in the city, state or federal govt. The workers themselves must do the job!! They themselves must suppress those who tomorrow will suppress them.

.....  
Our struggle against fascism is not the same as Roosevelt's so-called fight against fascism. The Roosevelt Govt. talks against Nazi penetration of South America NOT BECAUSE IT DESIRES TO FIGHT FASCISM BUT BECAUSE GERMANY'S TRADE COMPETITION THREATENS THE DOMINATION OF YANKEE IMPERIALISM OVER THE LATIN-AMERICAN PEOPLE.

BEWARE OF SUCH PHRASES AS "WAR AGAINST TOTALITARIAN NATIONS", "QUARANTINE THE AGGRESSORS". THESE PHRASES ARE SMOKE SCREENS BY WHICH AMERICAN "DEMOCRACY" HOPES TO JUSTIFY THE COMING PREDATORY IMPERIALIST WAR!!!

.....  
Marxists are anti-fascists not because they desire to protect the so-called democratic institutions of this country nor because fascism violates the established ethics or moral codes. We are opposed to fascism because it represents only another form of capi -



talist oppression. Capitalism, yes, even democratic capitalism is, the mother of fascism. Only he can fight fascism who fights capitalism.

ANSWER THE FASCIST ATTACKS AGAINST WORKERS!!

PICKET THE FASCIST MEETING!!

MARXIST WORKERS LEAGUE

P.O. BOX 35 STATION E, BROOKLYN, N.Y.

### THE POPE DIES-BUT RELIGION STILL LIVES

A few weeks ago, the spiritual saint of the Almighty departed quite abruptly from this earthly existence. How the sordid, material side of life sometimes penetrates the most ethereal of elements! However, this is not a eulogy for the late departed pope, who besides representing the impenetrable, also was not exactly uninterested in the vast holdings of the church. When the head of the house of righteousness and purity died, all the literary and political puppets of capitalism got out their Sunday adjectives and went to work with a zest. Some of "our most liberal" newspapers fairly wept for the 'pope of peace', although they did insert that that same benevolent individual had called for a crusade against communism and everything connected with it (which included workers unions, organizations, etc) and had also supported fascism most heartily. Besides supporting and calling for the victory of Franco, the 'prince of peace' had signed an agreement with Italy, by which the bonds of the church and of fascism were closely knit politically and financially speaking! For the death of the Pope, the representative of the most reactionary Catholic Church, we find ourselves incapable of calling forth any great flood of tears. Religion, to us, is still the opium of the people and we are unalterably opposed to any part of an institution which elevates the material problems of society into the realms of the supernatural in order to blind the oppressed peoples from reality, and the true answers of their many problems.

In the selection of the new pope, many new problems were brought to the fore. Again we find the material aspects intervening when Mussolini and Hitler asked for a pope who would not be unfriendly. Because of this, the Stalinists immediately saw an opportunity to drag in their line, and reached the depths of absurdity in their call for a 'democratic' pope as against a 'fascist' one!! No longer is religion as a whole the evil drug of the people, as Marx and Lenin emphasized time and time again. Now we have 'good' and 'bad' administrators of the poison to the people!

The workers regardless of race, color or creed must be taught that the entire concept of religion, irrespective of the many sects is basically reactionary and has nothing in common with their interests. Religion, in diverting the minds of the workers from their real enemies and the solution of their problems, is performing a noble task for the ruling classes, and is at the same time making tighter the chains of the workers and oppressed masses. The ruling classes, therefore, support religion as one would a mistress. For its job of keeping the minds of the workers and peasants stooped in superstition, religion is well paid. As a result, the stakes of reli-



gion are driven deep in the foundations of the present economic system. Realizing this, we can appreciate the complete idiocy of a cry for a 'democratic' pope! As someone else remarked, there 'jost haint no sech thing'! But it is not a contradiction as far as the Stalinists are concerned for it harmonizes with their political line, which will soon be dividing the atom and finding in said division, democratic and fascist elements!!!

Thus, we do not issue a call for a 'good' pope, but for the destruction of what he represents. This can only come about when the economic system upon which the church is founded is likewise destroyed. Then will not only the church itself disappear, but with economic security we will wipe out the necessity for the faith in a supernatural being and for supernatural answers to our material problems.

#### ..... THE SPLIT IN THE U.A.W.

Events have shown that the present split in the U.A.W. has threatened the existence of the entire international. With Homer Martin as president having convened a convention on March 4 in Detroit and the union executive board having called for a convention on March 20 in Cleveland, the conflict in the union has reached a culminating point. The union executive board composed predominantly of Stalinists and with Homer Martin allied with the Lovestone trade union bureaucrats, the struggle reduces itself to the question of which faction should control the affairs of the international. In speaking of rival factions intent upon controlling a union as powerful as the U.A.W., it is necessary to delve a little into their histories in order to ascertain their past, present, and future policies.

First it must be stated emphatically that the two factions are both class-collaborationist outfits. They have shown that in the past, before the present split. They both supported and initiated the sell-outs of the workers in General Motors, Chrysler, and the Hudson Motor Car companies. They bitterly condemned the sit-downs of the workers that took place in these plants, thus proving to the workers that they are agents of the bosses and are desirous of maintaining their lucrative positions. They have shown in action that they do not want to organize the Ford workers. Their activities center around negotiations with Bennett, head of the Ford personell department and not direct contact with the Ford workers. The workers have shown in the past that they are opposed to the present leadership (Martin together with the executive board) and their agreements with the bosses by conducting spontaneous sit-down strikes. The leadership replied by expelling from the union many workers for no crime then that of conducting militant struggles against the sell-outs that were made.

In a recent debate before Chrysler local 7, Martin and Thomas, of the executive board, vied with each other as to who was a better agent of the bosses. Martin declared he was for "strict observance of union contracts and definitely opposed to unauthorized sit-down strikes". Thomas quite agreed with Martin. He declared that he too believed in the "sacredness of contracts". However, he went one better by demanding an end to Lovestoneism in the auto industry. Martin counteracted then by stating that the "majority of the union executive board is controlled by the Communist Party".



Have the workers benefited from the Martin and the Stalinist leadership of the auto union? Decidedly no! There exists no workers democracy in any of the locals controlled by these factions. Workers have been beaten and even expelled whenever their criticism "embarrassed" the official leadership. Whenever the workers have attempted to resort to the sit-down strike as a means of protecting their interests, the Martin leadership declared that they were "outlaws" and refused to sanction those strikes. The Stalinist influenced leadership was guilty of the same crimes.

Martin's attacks against the Stalinists are of a right wing nature, inciting the membership against communism in general, in order to combat a class struggle tendency that may arise in the future. The Lovestoneites are forced to keep mum about these Martin red baiting tactics because their union positions depend on retaining the unholy alliance they have forged with Martin.

-----  
The Marxist Workers League does not make a fetish of union structure. That is subordinated to the program. Sell-outs can be conducted not only on the old craft basis, but also on the new industrial basis. Capitalism finds new and better ways, aye "more progressive" means to exploit the workers. While we stand for an industrial union structure as opposed to the craft, since it makes possible unity and solidarity on the part of the workers, the structure, however, is only a means to an end and not the end itself. Our aim is to build industrial unions with a class struggle basis as the foundation.

-----  
The present split in the auto union has undoubtedly harmed the working class. The revolutionists must counterpose to this harmful split the unity of the auto workers in one industrial union on a class struggle basis. Rank and file groups whose perspective will be the ousting of the class collaborationist leadership must be built in both auto unions!!  
.....

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# SPANISH SLAUGHTER ENDS

Events in Spain have proceeded with such unparalleled speed that hardly has one completed analyzing one action when another occurrence would overshadow it. A true picture of the Spanish situation can only be presented if the very latest occurrences are taken into consideration.

The coup d'etat by Miaja & Co. against the Negrin cabinet has brought out into the open the differences that have been existing within the loyalist camp ever since the fall of Catalonia. Convinced of the hopelessness of the loyalist military situation, one wing of loyalist capitalism, headed by Azana, Casado, Miaja & Co., decided that any small concessions gained by surrender to Franco would be preferable to a continuation of a futile struggle, whose only result would be a complete victory of Franco and loss of any concessions whatsoever. The second wing of loyalist capitalism, represented by Negrin and the Stalinists, decided to continue the fight until more definite guarantees than a mere vague promise of "justice" could be wrested out of Franco.

The Negrin supporters were ready to make peace with Franco on the condition that loyalist capitalism would be incorporated into the new economic set up that would follow the cessation of hostilities. In demanding guarantees against reprisals, it is clear that the Negrin supporters did not so much have in mind political reprisals. For it was very clear to them that having lost the war they could not expect to remain at the helm of the state. Guarantees against reprisals meant the right for the loyalist parasites to participate in the exploitation of the Spanish people. This Franco could not grant, since the war was fought in order to impose the exploitation of the Spanish people by the Franco section of capitalism as opposed to the loyalist wing of capitalism.

A good part of the loyalist capitalist class, it must be remembered, is a product of the Spanish war. Born during the war, it represents what can be termed the newly emerged bourgeoisie- stockholders, managers, directors who took over control of industries left by the supporters of Franco on their escape. These industries were at first taken over by the workers during the revolutionary days of July 1936. Gradually, with the strengthening of the political machine of the Republican capitalist state, came the expropriation of the factories from the workers. Most of these economic establishments remained nationalized, the profit from the workers being derived either through the institution of new stockholders, who took the place of the Franco capitalist owners, or through a more hidden form of exploitation- the appointment by the state of managers, directors, superintendents whose share of profit paraded under the term "salary". Economic reprisals by Franco is directly aimed at eliminating these parasites from their positions and restoring ownership of the means of production to the "rightful" owners, the Franco sympathizers who were forced to escape on the outbreak of the war.

The Franco regime could, however, afford to throw out some bones, though it could not integrate entire loyalist capitalism as demanded by Negrin. The Miaja-Casado clique, cognizant of this, decided to make a play for these small concessions. To execute their plans, they had to eliminate the chief faction, the Stalinists, who stood in the way. The time had



come when the Stalinists, loyal collaborators of capitalism, had to be thrown to the dogs. By suppressing the Stalinists, the military clique which overthrew the Negrin government, hoped to find favor in the eyes of the Burgos regime and thus manage to save its own hide.

It appears that the peace negotiations held between the Defense Council and the Burgos regime have reached no satisfactory conclusion. There are indications that Franco may have betrayed the Miaja-Casado clique. Representatives of the Defense Council have put forward an eight point program, which if accepted by Franco, would have sworn the loyalist regime to "unconditional" surrender. The eight points were part of the small concessions which were understood to go along with the suppression of the pro-war Stalinist faction by the Miaja clique. Franco demanded that the loyalists hand over as a token of sincerity the air force. This put the loyalists in a precarious position. They had no means of guaranteeing that Franco would carry out his part of the bargain. The surrender of the air force would have further weakened the loyalist military position and would have left the loyalist chiefs at the mercy of Franco. The loyalists, in order to avoid betrayal by Franco, appear to have favored a piece-meal surrender, i.e., every surrender of part of the arms was to be accompanied with the carrying into practice of the agreement reached at the peace conference. Franco demanded immediate surrender, stating that the points agreed upon were to be carried out after peace had come about. The loyalists distrusted Franco. That accounts for the breaking up of the peace negotiations. That also accounts for the failure of the loyalists to hand over the air force.

After the abrupt breaking off of the peace negotiations, the Miaja-Casado clique made a gesture of organizing a last minute defense of Madrid. This was done with the sole purpose of threatening General Franco with resistance unless the promised concessions were forthcoming. Of course, it was only a gesture, for the loyalist regime was militarily incapable of resisting. Franco was well aware of that. The Republican troops, who were propagandized by the Miaja government to favor a truce, refused to make a last minute stand and chose to desert the trenches. Franco struck and Madrid was captured without a shot. Everything seems to point that just as the Miaja clique has thrown Negrin and the Stalinists to the dogs in the attempt to save its own skin, so has Franco done the same to the Miaja gang.

The week-old counter-revolt against the Defense Council, headed by Miaja, had nothing in common with a working class uprising. They lie who declare this counter-revolt to represent "a spontaneous uprising of the working class which desired an effective struggle against fascism". As a matter of fact, the Spanish workers are so disgusted with the war as to have become indifferent to the outcome of the struggle. The revolt against Miaja had as its sole purpose the replacement of the Defense Council with the Negrin cabinet. Only people who attempt to twist history to fit their false views can deny that this revolt was organized by the Stalinists. Facts show that the regiments which revolted against Miaja were led by Stalinist generals. The rebels against Miaja made their central office at the Stalinist Madrid headquarters. The "Daily Worker" reported that Jesus Hernandez, member of the Central Committee of the Spanish Communist Party, played an active role in organizing this revolt. And then again, a militant class uprising would have never made as its slogan the continuation of a war under the leadership of a bourgeois government.

Those who deny the Stalinist character of the revolt against Miaja do so with the purpose of reconciling facts with their false theories. The Trotskyists and left-Trotskyists (Oehlerites) dare not admit that this revolt was Stalinist because then it would force them into the admission that the Negrin government desired to continue the war, something which they care not to admit since it contradicts their line. Their line accuses the Stalinists and Negrin of not desiring to combat Franco. This, because in their eyes the Spanish war is fundamentally a "war of the working class against fascism", and hence it would be a contradiction for them to say that Negrin and the Stalinists, collaborators with the bourgeoisie, desire to continue such a "progressive" war. To escape this contradiction, they have to falsify history by labeling the Stalinist revolt against Miaja "a militant class uprising". From a factual standpoint, it is clear that the Stalinists and the Negrin supporters organized this revolt because the war which they have been leading against Franco was an imperialist war which they had every interest to prosecute. By denying the Stalinist character of the revolt, these Trotskyist flunkies manage to hide from the workers the imperialist character of the war, since it will then become apparent to every class struggle worker that people like Negrin and counter-revolutionary Stalinists cannot possibly lead a civil war of classes.

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The Anarchists have once more illustrated that there is no limit to their degeneration. Having for a lengthy period attacked the Stalinists for "sabotaging the war against fascism", the Anarchists have declared themselves in support of the Miaja clique which sought a capitalist peace with Franco. In their haste to take revenge on the Stalinists who have persecuted them, the Anarchists have made common cause with the reactionary Defense Council gang.

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Strings are being pulled from all sides. British and French imperialism, which only yesterday staked its cards on the loyalist side, are busy making overtures to Franco in the hope of saving something out of the mess. A company sponsored by the millionaire, Juan March, supporter of the Franco cause, has been organized in Britain in order "to facilitate the entry of British products and capital into Spain". (From New York Times of Feb. 21, 1939) British and French imperialism hope to counteract Italian and German influence in Spain by means of economic advantages they propose to offer Franco. This has created a division among insurgent leaders. It appears that a section of which Juan March forms an important part seems to prefer British and French aid, figuring that in this manner Spain will protect its political and territorial independence. Italy and Germany appear to be, however, too much entrenched in Spain, politically, economically as well as militarily, to be pushed out so easily from a dominating position. Only people of great naivete could imagine so sudden a conversion of Franco to the British-French bloc at a time when Italian troops are still roaming the Spanish peninsula and German technical assistants are still supervising the insurgent's air force.

The recognition of the Burgos regime by France and Great Britain is in line with the foreign policy of these two powers. The British and French statesmen have been lately pursuing a foreign policy which is a realistic one and which does not substitute wishes for facts. These statesmen realize that nothing is to be gained by non-recognition except that it might possibly close some of the channels for influencing the Franco regime. Furthermore, having come to the conclusion that victory of the



insurgents is a matter of time, these two powers desire to liquidate the Spanish problem so as to have free hands to confront demands from Italy and Germany.

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Many reasons have been offered for the rout of the loyalist armies. The general accepted liberal-Stalinist-Socialist explanation is that the betrayal by the "democracies" together with their farcical non-intervention policy has prevented the shipment of material aid to the loyalist regime thus causing its defeat as a result of lack of arms. The second explanation, which inclines to substitute wishes for facts, is the Trotskyist contention that the defeat was a direct result of the policy of sabotage engineered by the loyalist chieftains in order to sell out the "civil war of classes" and drown the working class struggle at the hands of Franco. That is, the loyalist government was not anxious to win the war but, on the contrary, was sabotaging its own defense- so goes the Trotskyist explanation. A correct Marxist analysis of events will tend to reject both of these erroneous theories.

Undoubtedly, the shortage of arms contributed much to the defeat of the Republican armies. But that does not explain the whole story. Neither does the talk of "betrayal of Spanish democracy by the world democracies" help any in explaining the imperialist alignments or the real motives for the failure of these "democratic" imperialists to send arms to loyalist Spain. On the contrary, such a manner of posing the question only goes to hide the imperialist reasons behind the policies of Britain and France and really glosses over the class content of these governments.

That French and British imperialism desired a victory of the loyalist government is an open secret to any one who is in any way familiar with European politics. A glance at the European map should indicate clearly how precarious the position of Britain and France would be were Franco, backed by Germany and Italy, to fortify the straits of Gibraltar and the French-Spanish border and use them as threats against the lifeline of the British empire or as a base for a southern attack against France. But what our liberal-radical intelligentsia do not understand is that the Spanish events, important as they be to France and England, were in the heat of imperialist manoeuvres towered over and submerged by greater events. Britain and France were faced with the alternative of either going to war over Spain, in the weak military position they were then in, or, accept a temporary setback in Spain in the hope of gaining time for which to strengthen their military positions and thus maintain the integrity of their colonial empires. During the Czecho-Slovakian crisis they were placed in a similar dilemma. Like the Czecho-Slovakian, the Spanish situation was solved by handing out concessions.

France and Britain were willing to aid loyalist Spain up to a point of a general world conflagration. There is no denying that France on many occasions, even under the regime of that reactionary Daladier, winked many times at the non-intervention committee and allowed and even instigated the shipment of arms to loyalist Spain. Let us not forget that with the knowledge and permission of the French government, French volunteers were shipped over to Spain. At that time the international situation was less dark than it is now and France could well afford large scale aid to its loyalist ally. Also let us keep in mind that recently a document was uncovered by the Nationalist government, which was presented to Monsieur Berard, showing that the French government allowed the incoming of arms to loyalist Spain up to the very last day of the fall of

Figueras.

The saving of Catalonia, necessitated, however, intervention by France on a larger scale than hitherto attempted. Mussolini threatened that such large scale intervention would bring on an open war between the two countries. Faced with such a prospect, the French imperialists chose the lesser evil and abandoned their Republican allies. If this is what is meant by "the betrayal of Spanish democracy by the world democracies", then we can only conclude that a so-called non-betrayal would have meant a more active -and maybe a less strategic move- defense of French and British oppression of its colonial people.

Spanish loyalist capitalism had to be sacrificed at the altar of great imperialist power politics. This is not the first time in the history of the imperialist game that small state allies were "betrayed". But he is not a revolutionist who makes the point of his activity revolve around the defense of a so-called betrayed capitalist state; for he will then become entangled in imperialist intrigue out of which he can only emerge as a social-patriot just as soon as the great imperialist powers see it fit to return to the defense of the "poor, little betrayed country".

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Just as the Trotskyists and the various left-Trotskyist groupings have talked themselves into believing that Chiang Kai-Shek is sabotaging the defense of China, that Stalin would not desire a real, effective defense of Russia, so have they concluded similarly about the defense of loyalist Spain by the Republican government. Starting from the premise that Spain was up to the end of the war passing through a civil war of classes, that is, armed warfare between the working class and the capitalist class, they logically were forced to conclude that a capitalist regime, like the Negrin government, would not be interested in prosecuting such a struggle. The only fault with this reasoning is that the premise is false.

Undoubtedly, there was a great deal of sabotage in the thirty-one month old Spanish war. But that took place at an entirely different period than our "friends", the Trotskyists, are wont to believe. When at the beginning of the war there was sabotage there was at least reason for it and, besides, it was so evident as not to miss even the eye of the most blinded bourgeois correspondent. So it is recorded that when Toledo Castle was besieged by the working class militia, the government refused to allow its bombardment by air under the pretext that art treasures were hidden in it. This allowed Franco time to rescue the besieged fascists and capture the city. So it is also a matter of fact that the cities of Irun and San Sebastian were sold out by the Basque nationalists, allies of the Republican government, who feared the proletarian militia, which was the backbone of the defense of these two cities, more than they feared Franco. With the working class in control of the war against Franco, it became evident to the loyalist regime that every victory against the fascists represented a further strengthening of the independent class might of the proletariat. It became therefore necessary for the loyalist government to disorganize and facilitate the defeat of a war in which it did not have any interest. Copying the tactics of Marxists who apply the line of revolutionary defeatism in order to facilitate the transformation of an imperialist war into civil war, the loyalist regime resorted to a policy, which can be labeled as reactionary defeatism, as a means of submerging the war of classes and replacing it with an intra-capitalist war, an imperialist war.



It will do the Trotskyists no good to attempt to manufacture cases of sabotage where they do not exist. Misunderstanding the whole Spanish situation and the change of the character of the war, which gave vent to a desire on the part of the loyalist government to take an active interest in its prosecution, the Trotskyists have tried to hold on to their treacherous policy by citing (with no concrete proof) isolated incidents where the government failed to either sound the siren, switch off the lights or install sufficient anti-aircraft guns on the approach of rebel bombers. Russel Blackwell (Rosalio Negrette), a left-Trotskyist, who just returned from Spain, excels particularly in relating such incidents.

It would not be too difficult, we think, for any Clemenceauian\* critic of the Franco regime to cite cases of military negligence on the part of the Burgos government and conclude that therefore Franco was sabotaging the active prosecution of the war against the loyalists. There are undoubtedly many competing politicians in Japan who resort to relating similar incidents in order to point out that the prevailing government, which they desire to replace with themselves, is incapable of carrying on a serious, successful war against China. In either of these cases, the charges of negligence might prove quite true. But to conclude from it that the governments involved are sabotaging their respective wars, is to reduce oneself, to say the least, to absurdity. The Trotskyist accusations of sabotage must be placed on this plane.

The offensive which resulted in the capture of Teruel by the loyalists, the successful diversion on the Ebro front when Valencia was threatened, and the offensive on the Estramadura front by which the government hoped to relieve Franco's drive on Catalonia (which failed to gain headway because of lack of arms) all dispel any illusionary ideas that the gov't. was not interested in winning the war. Let it be said that, had the loyalist regime a few months ago, before the fall of Barcelona, any intentions of selling out the war, it could have very easily offered a peace to Franco then. The argument that the government desired to do so but could not because of the opposition of the people to a peace, is disproved by the fact that most of the workers and peasants in Spain have become so tired of the war as to have become unconcerned as to who would win the war. Witness, for example, the refusal on the part of the Barcelona workers to take up arms in the defense of the city!

So would it be ridiculous to use the Miaja-Casado overtures to Franco as an example of the sabotage by the loyalist regime of the war against Franco. For how would then these people explain the desire of the Negrin cabinet to continue with the war? Was this also an act of sabotage? The very same Miaja who desired today to end the war was the same person who a few months ago waged active war. The Miaja peace proposals represent merely, as we already have pointed out, a realistic approach to the situation. Feeling that the war was lost, Miaja saw no reason for continuing a hopeless struggle and, chose instead to ask for peace in the hope of wresting some concessions. He escaped from Spain after Franco betrayed him.

The real cause for the defeat of the Republican government is to be found in the disinterested attitude of the people of loyalist Spain as to the outcome of the war. The same Russel Blackwell related at a meeting in-

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\* Clemenceau was a French statesman who, criticized his own government during the World War in the attempt to show that only by placing his people into the government could France ever hope to carry on a successful war against Germany.

stances where anarchist workers, thrown into jail for violation of military discipline, were glad to remain in jail for fear of going to the front. "It's hard to get the peasant women to take the place of the men at work, especially when they are not interested who wins the war." This disinterested attitude was a logical result of the realization by the masses that the war pursued by Negrin & Co. was not the same kind of war they had begun in July 1936; that it was not worth fighting in such a reactionary war. It was this attitude that broke down the government's resistance, and prevented it from mobilizing the energies of the people behind the war. Adding to it the fact that it was "betrayed" by the democratic imperialist powers, which accounted for its lack of arms, successful defense against Franco was made untenable.

Unfortunately, there was no revolutionary Marxist Party to take advantage of this defeatist sentiment. Given correct leadership, this disgust with the war, this distrust of the government, could have been utilized to overthrow the capitalist dictatorship of Negrin & Co. As it was, the defeatism shown by the masses was not of a revolutionary nature but one of passive opposition. Despite this, the excellent opportunities inherent in the policy of revolutionary defeatism was demonstrated in the number of working class uprisings, (the papers spoke about anarchist uprisings) in the towns bordering France, following the fall of Barcelona and the shattering of loyalist "law and order". The Trotskyist or left-Trotskyist (Oehler, Stamm, Field, Marlen & Co.) policy of defensism, of a so-called defense of the July 1936 proletarian conquests which remained, after the suppression of the May 1937 Barcelona uprising, only in their wishful minds and not in fact, led to the strengthening and perpetuation of the loyalist government. It was in fact nothing short of the Stalinist policy of defense of bourgeois-democracy.

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As the Spanish war nears to an end, and as the noises of the warmongers gives way to whistling sounds of bullets and roaring sounds of cannons, and as world humanity is on the verge of being thrown into a greater slaughter than has ever before been recorded in history, we have a right to demand of those who make claim to being opposed to imperialist war: what lesson have you derived from the carnage in Spain? Were you capable of withstanding the crucial test in the Spanish war? And it must be said that only those who came out of the Spanish war not as social-patriots but as revolutionists will be able to withstand the greater pressure leveled upon them by a world war.

K. Mienov  
March 27, 1939



# Daladier = Product of Popular Front

(8)

In the first installment of "Daladier-Product of the Popular Front", it was pointed out how Blum, even before he headed his first ministry capitulated before the demands of the Fascists; how the workers, in the strike wave which ushered in the Popular Front "revolution" in France, went beyond the actual demands of the Popular Front, and forced it to grant extreme reforms, which were later wiped out by this same Popular Front through devaluation- high prices; how Blum could not even control the monetary field, but had to bow down before the commands of the French bourgeoisie; how nationalization and the "reform" of the Bank of France were just so much hot air; and finally the treachery of the CGT (General Confederation of Workers, a trade union), the Stalinists, and the Socialists toward the French workers. We will continue our analysis of the Popular Front and see what further "benefits" the workers derived from it.

The Popular Front, ostensibly, was set up by the Stalinists and Socialists with the avowed purpose of acting as a barrier against the march of Fascism in France. What actions did it take against the Fascists? It was an open secret in France that the hegemony of North Africa was under a pro-fascist. What was done about this? Here is what M.E. Ravage has to say about the matter in the Nation,

"In North Africa Peyrouton is the fascist son-in-law of the 'radical' Malvy is still pro-consul, as if nothing had changed in Paris, though the whole left press, including Blum's own 'Populaire', roused by the riots and provocateurs and race feuds down there, have for weeks been clamoring for his removal." ("Blum Government-Second Phase")

Internally, the Croix de Feu, the fascist organization, was "illegalized" but merely changed its name, to French Social Party, and was "legalized".

What reason can we give for the Popular Front sabotaging any attempts to crush Fascism, rather than leading a struggle against it? We think there are two reasons which especially account for this. First, the Popular Front had ridden into power on the crest of a tremendous wave of strikes which almost submerged the Popular Front. The latter had acted as a brake upon the workers' militancy. To advance any struggle against fascism, might have meant a resurging of that latent force of the workers, which this time might have been disastrous for the Popular Front. This time, the struggle against fascism might have reach such high proportions as to constitute a struggle against all of French capitalism, just as occurred in Spain at the beginning of the war. We shall soon see how Blum views any action of the workers against fascism- he and the Stalinists SHIVER when the workers begin to grumble- even when they show their discontent against the fascists!

The second reason for the Popular Front disliking to fight the fascists is - the Soviet Union. Since these days were before Munich, the

House of Kremlin still looked favorably upon the Franco-Soviet Pact. Therefore any action which would gain the disfavor of the French capitalists, or would weaken France in any way, would of course injure the pact. And finally, the class struggle, if brought to the surface in France, might it not have telling effects upon the state-capitalist set-up in Russia? Might the Russian workers not begin to display the same kind of discontent toward their Russian masters- their exploiters?

All of these factors of course pushed the French Stalinists along one road- the curbing of any militancy on the part of the workers, by gaining hegemony of workers' actions and then beheading any particular movement which the French workers might undertake. **EVEN THO THEY SHOUTED FROM THE ROOFTOPS THAT THE MAIN ENEMY WAS FASCISM, THEY FEARED TO STRUGGLE AGAINST IT!!** Revolution, to Stalinism, was MORE FRIGHTFUL than fascism!

Thus, the activity, of the Socialists and the Stalinists conformed on this point. The Socialists, because being reformists, feared the class struggle- feared that, they, along with the capitalist class would be smothered by the force of revolution. The border guards of the Order of Stalin in France had the reasons mentioned above to thwart any efforts of the workers toward revolution. And, of course, the workers could be betrayed by these people, because there existed no factor which could offset all these adversities- a Marxist vanguard to direct the workers toward state power. Thus Blum kept the workers in check, until Daladier, at an opportune moment, dealt the workers blow after blow, until today, they are weaker than ever.

Among Blum's achievements is his breaking of sit-down strikes with the armed might of the capitalist state, at whose helm he stood, and which he so zealously guarded against attack; the colonies still remained under as frightful oppression as they had formerly been- for imperialist interests; the "200 families" of France who ruled the Bank of France, seemingly stripped of their power over French workers, in reality remained, and still remain as strong as ever.

Even tho pressed by all these actions of the Popular Front, the workers still showed signs of protest, even against their leadership in the form- of strikes. Alexander Werth, in his article, "Which Way France" says the following:

"... but strikes never entirely ceased to plague the Blum government, harassed on the one side by labor and on the other by conservative Radical Socialists who wanted property rights respected."

In fact, the government went so far as to declare that under a law of Dec. 31, 1936, conciliation and arbitration had to take place before strikes and lockouts could take place, so badly "harassed" was the Popular Front.

One more insight into the actions of the Popular Front will provide us with our last example of the "revolution" which Blum headed. During the Clichy riots, in March 1937, in which workers clashed with Fascists and about five workers were killed, Blum was attending an opera with several foreign diplomats. When he received the news, he exclaimed,

"How could they do that to me."

In other words, the riots had disturbed Blum's Popular Front Program( and of course, the opera), which was going to benefit the workers- and now look what they had done to poor Blum! Alexander Werth perhaps gives us a better insight as to the reason of Clichy, and Blum's subsequent **illusion**.



Werth says,

"He (Blum-S) had good reason to complain. For Clichy became a symbol of the latent revolutionary temper of the Paris workingclass and of their rebellion against the Blum government." (New Statesman & Nation May 1, 1937).

The explanation of Werth needs no elaboration.

We will not go into the Chautemps and second Blum ministries. Both were not too different from the first Blum government, as far as the workers are concerned. Instead we would like to proceed now to a consideration of the Daladier Ministry and the General Strike. It can be seen that Daladier could not be much worse than Blum, only perhaps, more open in his suppression of the workers. Blum had served his masters well. He had stopped the upsurge of the workers against French capitalism. He had broken strikes, which probably would have been more difficult if there stood at the head of the government one who did not have the confidence of the workers. Now, however, the workers, seeing that their energies had been wasted upon Popular Front betrayal, became disgusted and demoralised and so the stage for Daladier was set, and as was to be seen, the defeat of the General Strike.

On April 12, 1938, Daladier formed a ministry and asked for decree powers. The Socialist and Communist Parities voted for the decree powers, conditionally. And what were these conditions? Simply that the Stalinists and Socialists would have the privilege of withdrawing support from Daladier if they would become dissatisfied with his ministry, since Daladier was known to have favorable ideas concerning France and Germany and Italy.

We came across Daladier twice before. First, when he bent like a reed in the storm at the time of the Stavisky riots, and secondly when he acted as War Minister. P.J. Phillip remarks about his stay as War Minister under Blum:

"He has governed wisely and in harmony not only with the army leaders but with that mixed mass of which the army is composed. Political movements among the troops which used to be common, have died down and the army has been brought to a very high point not only of material but of moral efficiency." - (NY Times- April 10, 1938- my emphasis)

This work of suppressing any workers expression in the army, which is what Phillips means by his reference to "Political movements", was all done by Daladier while he was in the Popular Front government in the office of War Minister. It seems as tho Daladier learned his lessons quite thoroughly during his apprenticeship under Popular Front.

On October 5, 1938, Daladier once again asked for decree powers. This time the situation had changed. The Socialists abstained, and the Communist Party voted against granting the powers. The reason was that the vote really was a result of the Munich agreement. No doubt, if Daladier had taken a strong stand against Germany at Munich, as the Kremlin wits and their French lackeys under Thorez and Cachin had desired, then Daladier would have received their support. For no matter how anti-workingclass the Reynaud decree laws might have been, the Soviet scouts in France would have supported them, giving as an excuse perhaps, the necessity to make France strong against Germany- fascism. In other words what is decisive to Stalinists all over the world, situated in various countries is not the class struggle, no, nor the fight against fascism which they so loudly proclaim, but a policy which subordinates everything else for the external and internal interests of the state bureaucracy of Russia- the exploiters of the Russian masses. Not fascism

but world revolution is Stalinism's worst enemy.

The Socialists, altho interested in having Daladier exhibit a strong hand at Munich nevertheless saw fit to abstain when pressure was brought to bear upon them. The French correspondent of the NY Times puts it this way:

"At one time the Socialists were ready to vote against the demand, (for decree powers- S) but after a warning by the Premier that he would take 'other measures' - which was interpreted to mean that he would ask the Senate to vote the dissolution of Parliament - the party decided to abstain from voting."

Later we will see how Blum will frantically demand the **convoking** of Parliament in order to do what Daladier desired to do when the latter threatened dissolution of the Parliament.

What may seem strange to some, Henri de Kerillis, a member of the extreme Right in Parliament, voted the same way as the CP did on the question of granting decree powers to Daladier. He was merely expressing the desire of a certain section of the bourgeoisie to be aggressive toward Germany; the Stalinist's expression of Soviet Russia's interests coincided with those of de Kerillis!

The next important struggle that occurred, and that precipitated the General Strike was the passage of the Reynaud Decrees. These decrees took away all semblances of "reform" that the workers thought they had gained. Immediately strikes flared up as protests against the Decrees and against Daladier, "Son of the Popular Front."

What did the Reynaud Decrees signify? It merely was an expression of capitalist suppression which did not need the cover of a Popular Front to hide behind. Now the capitalists, seeing that the leadership had, since July 1936, exhausted the workers, had betrayed them time and time again until they were spent, now discarded Blum, Thorez & Co. and methodically proceeded to deal one, final crushing blow to the French workers. Defiantly, Daladier set forth the decrees, and demanded - what are you going to do about it - huh? This same Daladier, whose name was hailed as the future Premier just before the elections in 1936 which brought the Popular Front to power would have been blown like a feather in a gale if he had attempted to become Premier in June '36, during the great strike wave. Only a Blum dared! And for what? - only to be the prelude to the inevitable conclusion- Daladier.

It is a matter of history now of how Daladier, through the military requisitioning of vital branches of economic life was able to crush the strike- the few strikes that occurred; of how Jouhaux, erstwhile head of the CGT gave the capitalists five days notice of the strike so that they could prepare (Jouhaux had attempted to completely head off the strike, but failed, and thus being forced from below to call some sort of strike, lost his job as a director on the Bank of France. Sad bureaucrat!); of how Blum begged members of various organizations not to allow Daladier (his protege) to dissolve the Socialist and Communist parties, of how, finally after the strikes were broken, Daladier received the blessings of the capitalist class with a huge vote of approval in Parliament.

Before we leave the question of the General Strike it is interesting to note how Daladier excused his actions in the suppression of workers during the strike. Daladier claimed that Germany had increased her production 17 per cent between 1929 & 1937, and that in France it had fallen 25 per cent. Therefore, reasoned Daladier, in or-

for to save the French nation. And Ludwig Lore in an article in the NY Post, in true liberal fashion, backs up the policy- if Daladier's intentions are really to strengthen French economy, and not to move toward fascism. Lore says,

"The failure of the general strike proved that the large majority of organized labor felt the contradiction between their opposition to the Government's appeasement policy on the one hand and their refusal to work longer hours in the armament industries on the other. As long as German labor in the arsenals and navy yards works sixty and seventy hours a week the armament industry of France can hardly produce sufficient munitions, airplanes and ships in forty hours. Again, if French dockworkers strike when a war crisis holds the country in its grip, they necessarily impair the discipline and prevent understanding for their duties in the struggle of democracy against Fascism."

Here, concisely, Lore puts forth Daladier's view. And why is it not the view of the Communist and Socialist Parties? For two reasons. First, because the Stalinists and Socialists fear Daladier might strike out against them, internally. And secondly, they oppose his foreign policy which does not play a strong hand against Germany and Italy. Otherwise these betrayers, along with Jouhaux, who opposed the General Strike, would have gladly supported blows against French workers if only it would aid in the fight against fascism. Briefly this should illustrate one thing: namely, that fascism cannot be fought unless the class struggle is synonymous with the term "fight fascism". If this is not so, one will be forced, as some were, at recently, in Spain to advocate the struggle against fascism, while supporting the Loyalist capitalist government which was oppressing Spanish workers, just as Franco was. In France it means that one must logically forsake the class struggle and must support Daladier's suppression of the French workers if he would strengthen France so that it could resist German fascism. Indeed, Daladier is the logical Popular Front Product.

What lessons can be learned from the French Popular Front experience? Is it merely enough to attack the Popular Front? No, that is not enough! For example, the Communist Trotskyites, in true centrist manner, after referring to Blum, Thorez, Jouhaux & Co. as "lackeys", "bureaucrats" etc. and in general attacking the Popular Front violently, and saying that,

"the issue is Fascism or a workers' France. There is no third road,"

what is their conclusion?

"Force the Socialist and Communist Parties and the CGT to take power!" (all emphasized-Socialist Appeal December 3, 1938)

If this slogan were not so tragic, it would indeed be funny. What, may we ask, is the difference between the Popular Front and the Socialist and Communist Parties and the CGT??? The Trotskyites refuse to drink milk, but instead yell for cow juice! Are not these people the same people, who, since 1936 have, time and time again betrayed the workers under the name of Popular Front? What can be gained by allowing these people to rule?- to keep on deluding the French masses? And if there is no third road- is this the "workers and peasants government!", or is this the  $\frac{1}{2}$  road, the other  $\frac{1}{2}$  road being completed when the Trotskyites themselves shall decide to



take over the reins of the government? Perhaps the Trotskyites will answer that the Popular Front included the petty bourgeoisie in the person of the Radical Socialists, and therefore was not equivalent to the type of government which they advocate! Then we must answer that these reformists will most always bend toward the petty bourgeoisie (and of course bourgeoisie) when it comes to action, and that even if they would form a Popular Front without the Radical Socialists, the Socialists, Stalinists, and CGT, would of necessity as reformists (and even the Trotskyites, as centrists) betray the interests of the workers, and would capitulate, as before, to capitalism. If one has not learned this from the Popular Front episode, one has not learned anything!

Behind the whole question of the Popular Front lies the question of democracy and fascism. This latter problem is basic for an understanding of the Popular Front, as well as to know how to fight against the Popular Front. If one does not understand that no matter how many workers' "representatives" are in a capitalist government, that that government does not represent the interests of the workers, then one cannot fight in the interests of the workers; likewise if one cannot grasp the fact that even if a capitalist government contains workers' "representatives", that that government cannot fight fascism, and if it does go to war against a fascist movement, that it is merely fighting in the interests of the capitalists, then one cannot hope to aid the workers in their struggle for freedom from capitalism. Concretely, if France, even with a Popular Front at its head should fight, let us say against Germany, then the workers must call for revolutionary defeatism on both sides, for the defeat of capitalism on both sides for the military defeat of both armies, as one step in the direction of the overthrow of capitalism and the realization of a workers' government!

A Popular Front, be it in France or in any other country; be it called Popular Front or a "workers and peasants government" or any other name can serve no other historic function except to stand as an obstacle in the way of proletarian revolution. The Popular Front is summoned in when the workers are on the move - moving to destroy capitalism. The Popular Front is the parachute of capitalism. The workers must not be fooled by any talk of Popular Frontism - a government of workers, by workers, FOR CAPITALISM. No matter how many reformists gather together in a government, with the centrists, it can be nothing but some sort of Popular Front. Only the Marxist vanguard can lead the workers toward the overthrow of capitalism. None exists in France. We can help build such an organization in France and all over the world, if we, here in America, fight to build the Party here.

STANFORD

# TROTSKY-MARLEN<sup>MS</sup>CC

## Editorial Note:

The Independent Labor League (Lovestoneites) was left out of this article for the reason that it is a tendency not connected with the Trotskyist current as the various groups analyzed in this article are. In the coming issue of the "Spark" we shall have the occasion to take them up independently, significantly so, because of the influence they wield over certain labor unions and the harm that their class collaborationist policies have brought to the working class.

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The many revolutionary, working class, groupings which have sprung up in the last few years are viewed by some tired radicals as a sign of the hopelessness towards the creating of a new, revolutionary International. Every split, occurring in the labor movement, instead of bringing to these people the thought that perhaps there is something good and healthy about the separation of the revolutionists from the opportunists, calls forth the old, familiar cry: "what, another split!" By this they indicate that the solution, if such a thing still exists in their minds, lies in unity for unity's sake. We will have time to take up this point later on.

Undoubtedly, the many splits which have been occurring very frequently of late, indicates a groping on the part of the workers for the correct road. The splits, coming at a period of victory of reaction in one country after another, reveal a dissatisfaction of certain workers with the policies of the influential Communist and Socialist Parties which have been responsible for these disasters. It is clear, therefore, that the revolutionist who seeks to struggle against capitalism and not to capitulate before it, must break with the Communist and Socialist Parties. To remain in the same organization with people who vote for military credits of their respective bourgeois governments, with people who give advance notice of their readiness to support a predatory, imperialist war in the name of defeating (foreign) fascism is, to say the least, to take the responsibility for such betrayals. To oppose a split with such people on the grounds that it will leave the labor movement divided, and thus harm it, is to fail to understand the harm that these treacherous policies are doing to the working class; it represents a failure to realize that a struggle against these policies unavoidably leads to a break with the Parties which pursue them.

Consequently, we disregard the cries of splitters when they are hurled at us. We demand to know, over what questions did the break occur, and what new policies do those who split propose?

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The many groupings are a sign of the disintegration which has set in the labor movement. To be sure, these groupings are not the cause for the disintegration. On the contrary, they even represent a protest against the policies which have led to this disintegration. In the sense, however, that there does not exist one united Marxist Party but small, separated revolutionary groupings, these groupings reflect a situation of labor's weakness, of its low position in being tied to the chariot of capitalism, and consequently, of its degeneration.

These splits are natural and unavoidable just as long as the class struggle remains unavoidable. Given a situation where the labor move-

ment goes down in defeat largely as a result of the betrayal by the leading "working class" parties, there is bound to occur splits which aim in establishing a new policy other than the one which led to disaster. Clarification of ideas thus results. After a process of separation and clarification the new process of unifying all revolutionary, Marxist elements behind the correct program then begins.

This must not be interpreted to mean that all existing groupings which have broken from the Socialist and Communist Parties add to clarification. As a matter of fact, most of them add to confusion. What is meant is that these splits clear the air of blind acceptance, brings about a reevaluation of ideas long held to be untouchable, and makes possible the birth of one tendency, which will emerge with a correct program.

As an illustration, we will take the case of James Burnham. Burnham, a Trotskyist, refused to accept Trotsky's contention that the proletariat, by the mere fact that there exists nationalized property in Russia, is the ruling class. Counterposing to Trotsky's claim that Russia is a Workers State, Burnham (also Joseph Carter) held that in Russia there exists neither a proletarian nor a capitalist dictatorship but a "Stalinist state", a new hybrid never before seen in history. As erroneous and confusing as this position was, it nevertheless broke the dogmatic, sanctuary belief about workers rule in Russia, and allowed some Trotskyist individuals to use Burnham's position as a bridge across which to cross to a correct state capitalist analysis of Russia.

The same applies to the splits in general. Most of these groupings present various positions on fundamental questions which aside from being confusing are very dangerous to the working class. But the ensuing wide discussion, polemics which are opened up as a result of these splits, allows a few individuals to break through the fog and reach the Marxian compass.

It goes without saying, that all of these groupings who share false positions on fundamental question will have to be broken up. The Marxist Party cannot, and will not, be built through a fusion with these groupings. Though today such groupings as the Oehlerites, Fieldites, Stammmites and Marlinites can still be labeled as revolutionary, though not Marxist (since they make attempts to fight capitalism but have not the correct position to do so successfully), tomorrow, when history will put the proletarian revolution on the order of the day, the false policies of these groupings will then be given the test, and will, undoubtedly, move these groupings to the counter-revolutionary camp. Already, their political "opponents", the Trotskyists, from whom these groupings borrow most of their principles, have deserted the revolutionary camp in which they still found themselves a few years ago, though even then they were not Marxist. These groupings, must by the logic of their position, follow the path the Trotskyists have trodden on.

Having all this in mind we can now proceed to analyze the various American working class groups, Leagues and Parties which are on record as opposed to the opportunist policies of the Communist and Socialist Parties. We repeat: the task of this article is not to analyze the Socialist and Communist Parties. We spend enough time exposing these open social-patriots. This article is devoted to those workers, who, on breaking from these two parties join the...



either the Trotskyists or the left-Trotskyist groupings, thinking that they have finally arrived at the Marxist camp.

### THE SOCIALIST WORKERS PARTY (TROTSKYISTS)

This organization is more a League than a Party. It has no great influence in the masses, nor in the class struggle.

On questions of a fundamental nature such as the relation of revolutionists towards bourgeois-democracy, labor party, road to power, Peoples Front, coalition governments, how to defeat fascism, the Trotskyist, though differing with Stalinism in the degree of left phrases, indicate an agreement with them in content.

Having really never in action considered the independence of the revolutionary party a matter of principle, the acceptance by the Trotskyists of the labor party slogan proved only a question of time. The contention made by their political "opponents", the Oehlerites and Fieldites that the Trotskyist revision of this principle dates back since the French Turn (the liquidation into the Socialist Party of France) constitutes wishful thinking on the part of those, who would have us believe in the Marxian content of Trotskyism prior to 1934, the date of liquidation of the Trotskyists into the Socialist Party of France.

An historical study of Trotskyism will prove that ever since its inception, Trotskyism has never reconciled itself to the Leninist principle of the independence of the Marxist Party. Starting from 1903, when Trotskyism agitated for fusion between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks, it continued along this unity road by making an unprincipled combination with the Zinoviev group in 1926 (by which it pledged itself to the acceptance of the opportunist workers and peasants government slogan), by refusing to split with Stalin and attacking the younger elements who saw the necessity to do so already in 1926, by its insistence on reforming Stalinism up to 1933, and finally, by its liquidation into Social-Democracy.

To imagine that such a liquidationist tendency could ever oppose the labor party slogan for any length of time, would be to blind one's eyes and hope for miracles. While it is true that there was a time when Trotskyism considered the building of a labor party a violation of Marxian principle, it is also true, that at the very same period, it viewed affiliation to such a party a matter of tactic. Gradually, of course, this fine "distinction" had to give way. It soon became clear to the Trotskyist theoreticians that it was illogical to urge affiliation or liquidation into a labor party (a genuine, mass, class, non-revolutionary, non-reformist labor party), and at the same time oppose its creation on principled grounds. Today, it can be said without any reservations, that on this question there is not a bit difference between the Stalinist and Trotskyist position, save of course, that whereas the Stalinists view the labor party as a step toward the Peoples Front and through the Peoples Front to socialism, the Trotskyists contend that it is not at all necessary to go through the Peoples Front (the old Trotskyist theory of skipping stages, exclaim the Stalinists)! Through the labor party to socialism, constitutes the Trotskyist position.

Similarly, on the question of the relation of revolutionists toward bourgeois-democracy, one cannot detect a fundamental difference between Stalinism and Trotskyism. Whereas a few years ago, Trotskyism violently attacked the Stalinists for becoming defenders of capitalist democracy, today, Trotsky, faced with a concrete situation as Spain, washes away his former criticism and declares that "the defense of bourgeois democracy against fascism is only a tactical episode submitted to our line". (Trotsky's article on "Answers to Questions concerning the Spanish situation", published in October 1937 in the Internal Bulletin of the Trotskyists) It is like a Social-Democrat saying that within the framework of his general line of achieving socialism (in due time, of course), the entrance into a capitalist government and the defense of the bourgeois parliamentary machine are only tactical episodes, in no way washing out his "struggle" for socialism. In both cases, the defense of the democratic form of capitalist oppression is the actual result.

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On the decisive question of the ROAD TO POWER, the Trotskyists have completely abandoned the principles enunciated by Trotsky in his famous thesis on the "Permanent Revolution". Whereas for years the Left Opposition (name of Trotsky group when it still called for reform of Stalinism), carried on a determined fight against the idea of workers and peasants government, now their new Transitional Program, which is a new freak in the history of the labor movement, demands "of all parties and organizations which base themselves on the workers and peasants and speak in their name...to break politically from the bourgeoisie and enter upon the road of struggle for the workers and farmers government." To the question whether the creation of such a freak of nature as a joint government of two opposing classes is possible, the Trotskyists reply in their characteristic centrist manner that "past experience shows... that this is to say the least highly improbable." (From the Transitional Program) And as Cannon & Co. would say, "not theoretically excluded". It was this phrase, "not theoretically excluded" which Cannon & Co. inserted into their resolution when forced to answer whether the Socialist Party could be reformed or not. As was predicted, this talk of "theoretically not excluded", which is another word for "highly improbable", was used to cover up the real line, namely, that the reform of the Socialist Party was not only possible, but the fate of the proletariat actually depended on such reform. Similar centrist acrobatics are used to put over the line of a workers and farmers government. Already the word "highly improbable" is thrown into the waste basket and the demand is made to "enter upon the road of struggle for the workers and farmers government."

Thus we obtain a picture of a position which tells the workers that in between a workers and a bourgeois dictatorship lies a middle road government, which is neither proletarian nor capitalist:

"Even if this highly improbable variant somewhere (in the stratosphere- my own-M) at some time (?) becomes a reality and the 'Workers and Farmers Government', in the above mentioned sense, is established in fact, it would represent merely a short episode on the road to the actual dictatorship of the proletariat." (From the Transitional Program- emphasis mine)

Now we already see the Trotskyists envisioning the coming of such a workers and farmers government as a reality. It has also been established

by their own mouths, that such a government will not be the ACTUAL dictatorship of the proletariat. What then will it be? No reply is forthcoming from the Trotskyist Transitional Program. Lenin, however, did reply to such people:

"The economy of capitalist society is such that the ruling power can only be either capital or the proletariat which overthrows it. Other forces there are none in the economics of this society." (Vol. XVI, pg. 217)

It is obvious that such a line as the Trotskyists have does not put the proletariat on the road to power but on the road to disaster.

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By now it must become clear that, as a result of such an opportunist position on the Road to Power, the acceptance of Peoples Frontism and coalition governments has not been hard for Trotskyism to swallow. In France the "workers and peasants government" slogan finds its concrete expression in the propaganda of the Trotskyists for a Socialist-Stalinist Ministry, a typical coalition government. In opposition to the Peoples Front, the Trotskyists' solution to defeat fascism lies in a Socialist-Stalinist united front, which, with the exclusion of the Radical Socialists, would turn out to be nothing less than a Left Peoples Front.

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Paradoxically as it may seem, the field where Trotskyism reaches its greatest agreement with Stalinism is over the Russian question. As loud as the Trotskyist program may shout against Soviet-Bonapartism and the totalitarianism of the Russian regime, as often as it may "accuse Stalinism of having subjected the economic life of the country to the interests of the bureaucratic clique at the top" (World Congress Manifesto Against Imperialist War), it nevertheless aids Stalinism to propagate the illusion that the proletariat is the ruling class in Russia. Having taken over the Stalinist theory that the abolition of private ownership is the proof of the non-existence of capitalism in Russia, Trotskyism has given Stalinism unimaginable aid in maintaining the allegiance of the workers for the Stalin regime, since the average worker cannot possibly take the Trotskyist definition of capitalism, i.e., private property, and agree with Trotsky that Stalinism is constantly moving Russia back towards capitalism. (The collectivization measures undertaken by the Stalin regime, the liquidation of the NEP at a time under Stalin)

On the central question of a war alliance between Soviet Russia and an imperialist state, Trotskyism has again comforted the Stalinist machine by the fact that its line is basically no other than that of the Kremlin supporters. Starting from the false premise that such a thing as a mixed war (i.e., a workers state fighting on the same side with an imperialist state) is possible, the Trotskyists have tremendously aided the Stalinites in their social-patriotic work. Trotskyism is already on record as being against working for the defeat of one's own capitalist government in case of an alliance of that government with Soviet Russia in time of war.

On other important issues such as a position on the general war question, trade union question, Spain and the Sino-Japanese war, Trotskyism takes typical centrist positions that would go very far in comforting the bourgeoisie, had Trotskyism the mass influence to carry its line into wide action. Workers who desire to struggle effectively against capitalism must break from Trotskyism no less than they must reject Stalinism or Social-Democracy.



THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE (OEHLERITES)

Left-Trotskyist, would be the best description for this organization. Outgrowth of a split from the Trotskyists over the French Turn (liquidation of Trotskyists into Socialist Party) the Oehler group refuses to see the continuity of the Trotskyist liquidationist line on the Party ever since 1903. The Oehler group refuses to review the history of the Left Opposition struggle in Russia, which would corroborate the view that Trotskyism in action never recognized the independence of the Marxian organization as a principle. Clinging to the eleven points of the Left Opposition, one of which declared that the independence of the Marxist Party was a matter of principle, the Oehlerites insist that the Marxian character of Trotskyism came to an end when they violated this principle. They fail to distinguish words from action. The Oehler group fails to recognize that this written declaration (the eleven points of the Left Opposition) was washed out in action by the refusal of Trotskyism to form independent organizations opposed to the Communist Parties, despite the Trotskyist assertions that Stalinism betrayed one revolution after another during this period. Similarly, with the program of the once existing Trotskyist Workers Party. In words the Workers Party declared the independence of the Marxist organization a question of principle. In action, the Workers Party orientated its activities around the Socialist Party and did everything to violate this principle. It is no wonder that the Oehlerites considered the Workers Party a Marxist organization, because here again they failed to see the distinction between words and action.

Not understanding Trotskyism and from whence it stems from, it was inevitable that the Oehler group would turn out to be left-Trotskyist. Rejecting the French Turn, the Oehler group, by the mere fact that it did not bother to reevaluate the other Trotskyist positions, accepted them. Thus it swallowed the whole Trotskyist position on Russia, the crucial question of our day. Aside from the opportunist positions it took along on leaving the Trotskyists, the Oehler group in its brief period of existence, has managed to create quite a few of its own non-Marxist positions which, of course, resemble the Trotskyist views in their fundamental structure.

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The hopelessness of Oehlerism is best evidenced by its theoretical confusion on the war question, touchstone of any revolutionary policy. The Oehlerite confusion is particularly criminal since it does not err on the method of combatting war but on the determination of the character of the war. Its lip service to the policy of revolutionary defeatism becomes therefore meaningless in the light of its inability to designate correctly the character of the war. Like the pre-World War Socialists, the Oehlerites talk against imperialist wars in general, But they fail to designate the imperialist character of the war when the fighting actually begins.

The first test of the Oehlerite war position came with the roar of the cannons in Spain. Upon the start of the struggle in July 1936 the Oehlerites correctly designated the conflict to be basically a struggle between the working class against the capitalist system, i.e., a civil war of classes. As the war progressed, however, the intra-capitalist struggle between the "democratic" capitalists and the Franco section

of capitalism began to overshadow the war of the working class against its oppressors. Confronted with a new phenomenon, the transformation of a civil war of classes into an imperialist war, the Oehlerite' confusion began to show itself. Forced to take cognizance of reality, they admitted that the working class struggle against capitalism has become subordinated to "the imperialist conflict having the upper hand..." They admitted that the war has been taken out of the hands of the working class and placed into the hands of the bourgeois Peoples Front government. But, unlike the Trotskyists who label the Spanish war progressive since it represents "a civil war in form of a war between bourgeois democracy and fascism...", the Oehlerites refuse to designate the present war as either progressive or reactionary. They "are opposed to sending men...to this front" (October 1937 issue of "Fourth International") but at the same time do not call upon the workers to oppose the war. Certainly a position which offers no guidance to the workers!!

In claiming that "the Spanish struggle is more than MERELY an imperialist conflict" (my emphasis) and in saying that if the July revolutionary upsurge of 1936 had been decisively defeated it would make "possible the transformation of the war into a PURE imperialist war" (Nov. 1937 Fourth International- emphasis in original) the Oehlerites evidence a complete lack of understanding of the relation between imperialist war and civil war and the factors which determine the character of the war. They fail to grasp that under present sharp class antagonisms, no imperialist war is FREE or PURE of the class struggle elements which always manage to insert themselves. Kerensky prosecuted the war against Germany despite the fact that civil war was brewing in the rear and front. But it was not until these civil war aspects became the dominant factor that Kerensky's war against Germany ceased. The same held true for Spain. The fact that the imperialist or intra-capitalist struggle aspects obtained the upper hand and took over the prosecution of the war did not automatically signify the complete disappearance of the class struggle elements. They kept on existing, only in a subordinate form. The continuance of the war, once under capitalist hegemony, strengthened the imperialist and weakened the class elements; just as Kerensky desired to prosecute the war against Germany, since that could only weaken the brewing civil war.

Failing to understand this relationship between civil war and imperialist war, the Oehlerites resorted to talk about the IMPURE imperialist character of the Spanish war in order to cover up their support of the Loyalist struggle.

Already, the Oehlerites, having a hard job in proving how the Spanish war is a war between the proletariat and capitalism, have begun to drop out of their literature the phrase, "the Spanish civil war of classes". Instead they now use more often the term, "civil war against fascism". They have arrived at the logical opportunist position we predicted they would. Whereas before they still clung to the phrase "civil war of classes" and attempted to prove that basically the struggle raged between the proletariat and the capitalist class (though nobody could see it), today the Oehlerites have come to realize that no worker would believe the fantastic story that the proletariat in Spain was battling capitalism. They have therefore adopted the Trotskyist formula, namely, that it is a civil war between bourgeois democracy and fascism. This is what the July 15, 1938 issue of the "Fighting Worker" had to say:

"In carrying out the policy of NO SUPPORT TO ANY CAPITALIST STATE,

what shall be the revolutionist policy in a Civil War between Fascism and those who oppose it?"

It will be noticed that the old Marxist definition of civil war as denoting a struggle between two opposing classes has been dropped. The new Oehlerite definition of a civil war is one "between fascism and those who oppose it." Instead of declaring openly, like the Trotskyists do, that the Spanish war is a "civil war between bourgeois democracy and fascism", the Oehlerites smuggle in their opportunism through the rear door. They omit the word, bourgeois democracy, and substitute it with "those who oppose it". If the phrase, "those who oppose it" means the working class, then the sentence should read thus: a civil war between capitalism and the working class. The Oehlerites, however, have in mind something else. They have in mind an anti-fascist war, which is neither a class nor an imperialist war. In short, they have the concept of bourgeois democracy going to war with fascism in order to protect democracy.

It is striking to see how the Oehlerites have transplanted their confusion to the Sino-Japanese war and the Czecho-Slovakian situation!! Here it may be recalled that in splitting from the Oehlerites, we, of the Marxist Workers League, indicated that our struggle with Oehlerism was not so much over the Spanish question as much as it was over the war question in its entirety, in all of its general aspects.

The struggle of China against Japan is viewed by the Oehlerites as representing dominantly a fight between American-British interests on one side and the Japanese on the other. Chiang Kai-Shek is supposed to be fighting mainly, not for the interests of the Chinese national bourgeoisie, but for American-British imperialism. The logical conclusion of such a position would be to label the Sino-Japanese war imperialist on both sides (comparable to the Chaco war fought by two puppets of British and American imperialism). This is, however, not the conclusion which Oehlerism draws as a result of its above analysis. The conclusion is that the war on the part of China is progressive. Thus they have arrived to a correct designation of the character of the war out of an entirely false analysis. The lesson that must be drawn from such acrobatics is this; that, given a different situation where the above Oehler analysis will hold true, these people will turn out to be defensists and social-patriots when the events will demand a policy of active opposition to the war.

The link between the Oehlerite false position on Spain and their incorrect evaluation of the Sino-Japanese events can now be established clearly. It can now be seen how their incorrect position on Spain has supplied them an entirely wrong yardstick by which to determine the character of the Sino-Japanese war. It must be remembered that with regards to the Spanish war the Oehlerites admitted freely that the "imperialist conflict was having the upper hand" but arrived at the ridiculous position of refusing to send men to the front at the same time that they did not urge a break from the war, that is, they supported the war. Transferring their position to China, they have stated that in China too the imperialist aspects had the upper hand, i.e., Chiang Kai-Shek fighting for American and British imperialism, and have arrived at a similar position of support to the war.

In the critical Czecho-Slovakian days preceeding the Munich Pact, the line of Oehlerism was to tell the Czecho-Slovakian workers to defend "their native land against fascist aggression". (See "Fighting Worker")



"their native land against fascist aggression". (See "Fighting Worker") A typical Czech bourgeois-Stalinist-Socialist-Trotskyist slogan!! This despicable social-patriotism went hidden under the cloak of a war for "national liberation". Thus the Oehlerites evidenced also a failure to understand the National and Colonial Question. In their haste to apply Lenin's teachings on the colonial question, they forgot that the Czechs were not struggling to free themselves from imperialist domination but were ready to go to war in order to be able to continue their twenty year oppression of the Sudetens, Hungarians, Poles and other nationalities, economic oppression as well as political. They forgot that Lenin had warned that national struggles had shifted away from Europe to Asia and Africa, meaning by that that the oppressed minorities' struggle along national lines had been, because of the advanced capitalist position of all countries in Europe, towered over by the class struggle and the inter-imperialist struggles. True to their form, the Oehlerites continued to advocate resistance to Germany at the front and the class struggle against Benes at the rear, once more forgetting that resistance to Germany, before the Czech proletariat had overthrown its own bourgeoisie, could only go to strengthen the Czech bourgeoisie which would lead the war against Germany.

The Oehlerite stand on an isolated war between Czecho-Slovakia and Germany had once more proven the fundamental false position of Oehlerism on the war question. The war on two fronts which the Oehlerites have advocated for Spain has been transplanted to fit the Czecho-Slovakian scene. Opposed in words to the war Benes would lead against Germany, they nevertheless did not issue the slogan of the revolutionary defeat of the Czech armies. Instead they tried to straddle the fence. They sought a position in between defensism and defeatism- an impossible position, since there exists no position which is neither defensist or defeatist. They sought to take over the old Trotskyist "neither victory nor defeat" position, which was attacked by Lenin during the World War. The Oehlerite talk, therefore, of carrying on a relentless class struggle against the Czech bourgeoisie was one of those left covers used by all centrists to hide their support of the war.

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The Oehlerite misunderstanding of the colonial question is astounding. When it has now become clear to the whole world that Cardenas' nationalization and expropriation measures are aimed equally at American as well as British imperialism, the Oehlerites keep on chanting that "Cardenas is a puppet of American imperialism". The expropriation of American oil, railroads, mines, and land has had no effect on the Oehlerite stubbornness to maintain a position which contradict obvious fact. Offering no proof whatsoever, they write that "Cardenas is a puppet of a group of American imperialists against the Calles group of American imperialists and the British imperialists." (May 1 st. issue of the "Fighting Worker") It is safe to predict that should war ever break out between Britain and Mexico, the Oehlerites will, of course support the war on the part of Mexico, at the same time that they will assert that Cardenas is fighting dominantly for the interests of American capital.

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It is significant to mention that while attacking the Field group for its hopes in reforming the POUM, the Oehlerites, too, once upon a time had similar illusions. After describing the attempt of the POUM in

drawing left socialists into joint action on a program of building Workers Alliances and trade union unity, the Oehlerites relate that the POUM makes all these attempts "with a view to ultimate fusion (with the Largo Caballero left socialists - mine) if a Marxian programmatic agreement can be reached." "If that could be accomplished it would be a big step forward" comments the Oehlerite "Fighting Worker" of May 2, 1936. Thus whereas the Fieldites only held out hopes for reforming the POUM, the Oehlerites held out hopes of incorporating the Largo Caballero Left-Socialists into the Marxist current!! This, together with its declaration that affiliation to the Centrist London-Amsterdam Bureau would not be incorrect in principle, shows clearly that the Oehlerites reject the French Turn only when it is applied to reformists. In dealing with Centrists, the Oehlerites outdo the Trotskyists.

The unprincipledness of the Oehler group first came to light in the fusion negotiations between it, the Field group and the Bordigists, held about 2½ years ago. Here was an attempt by Oehler to bring two opposing forces, the ultra-left Bordigists and the right wing Field group into the same organization. Oehler acted as the middleman, reconciling the irreconcilables. It is well known that since then, the Bordigists as well as the Field group never altered their basic program, and neither did the Oehlerites, yet today they are all organizationally apart despite the fact that 2½ years ago they all signed a common programmatic document covering most of the fundamental questions. How was it possible for Oehler to get them all to sign a common document? It is easy to explain by merely reviewing the document.

The document was written to please everybody. The language of the document was so vague as to allow Field to give his interpretation of what was meant, the Bordigists theirs and the Oehlerites theirs. What, however, prevented the fusion? Was it that at the end of the negotiations principled disagreements were noted? Nothing of the kind! The fusion negotiations were broken off, and since then never restarted, because of a fist fight that took place in the Field organization. Oehler claimed that his organization was not going to negotiate with a group in whose inner ranks "gangster methods" were used. That, however, was the official excuse. The real motive for breaking up negotiations went hidden.

The Oehler group, on making exit from the Trotskyists, found itself confronted with the existence of other groups. The existence of such small groups proved irksome. The Oehler organization desired to swallow them up. It looked around in all corners of these United States to find some small group with which to fuse. In New York it found two, the Fieldites and the Bordigists. It announced that in Chicago it has also found two, though nothing further was heard of the Chicago groups, save that approaches have been made. To facilitate fusion with the Bordigists the Oehlerite leadership spread around to its members the rumor that the Bordigists, partly under the Oehler group pounding, were breaking away from their traditional ultra-leftism.

During the negotiations the membership of the Oehler group was astounded to hear that although in the past Field's IAG line (Field's insistence on affiliating to the 2½ International, the London-Amsterdam Bureau) was labeled opportunist and his New Zimmerwald line attacked bitterly, the negotiations had revealed fundamental agreement. As a result, faction fights broke out within the Oehler group. Oehler began to realize that

whereas it was hoped a fusion with Field would net an organizational gain, it turned out that more people would actually leave the Oehler group in opposition to the fusion. Oehler therefore had to look around to find a way of breaking up the negotiations. The first fight within the Field group offered that opportunity.

We resurrect this incident because this incident, although it may be viewed by some people as an isolated "mistake", reveals to us a link in the chain of Oehler's application of the French Turn to centrist groupings. If we add to this the Oehler's group wooing of the PCUM and Spanish left-Socialists, the compliments it once upon a time paid to the centrist Revolutionary Socialist Workers Party of Holland, its tactical opposition to affiliation to a centrist IAG International, we then become aware that all these "incidents" are part of a general false line on the question of the Party.

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The Oehler position on Russia, as we already remarked, is identical with the Trotskyist. Like the Trotskyists, the Oehlerites too insist that Stalinism has no desire to effectively defend Russia- a purely imaginary invention, dug up to coincide with its erroneous belief that the Russian proletariat is the ruling class. For it is clear that were Oehlerism to admit that Stalinism not only can defend Russia but will destroy anyone who sabotages the military machine should it ever be engaged in war, Oehlerism would then most logically have to designate Stalinism a progressive role. For it is clear that any force or movement which defends a workers state is progressive. To avoid labeling the Stalinist clique of Russia progressives, the Oehlerites resort to manufacturing the fable that Stalin would sabotage the defense of Russia. Discarding the Oehlerite wishful thinking, it goes without saying that Stalinism will effectively defend Russia, precisely because in Russia there exists a dictatorship of capital over labor, Stalinism representing the former, to whose interests it is to defend the right to exploit its own people.

Failing to understand the Russian question, the Oehlerites really lack an understanding as to what constitutes capitalism. More so, they do not grasp the latest tendency in world economy- the development towards state capitalism. Our differences with the Oehlerites goes therefore deeper than the Russian question. Our differences revolve around the heart of Marxism- what constitutes capitalism. It goes without saying that the Oehler group cannot hope to struggle for a Workers Government in the United States when it does not even understand the Leninist definition of a Workers State.

#### THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE (STAMMITES)

This group, a recent split off from the Oehlerites, distinguishes itself from the latter by having the name of its organ, "Revolt" inscribed in parenthesis following the official title of its organization. Revolting, indeed, does it become after one begins to search for the fundamental political differences involved in the split, and finds none. The unprincipled nature of the Stamm split is indicated in the general charges of opportunism leveled against Oehler by Stamm, and the refusal of the latter to state where precisely the opportunism lies.

Such talk as a "final break was made with the group around Oehler, which is an impediment to serious revolutionary work because of its defeatism" without for one moment bothering to explain the false political positions of Oehler, which alone could make possible defeatism, must be taken as a charge made for the purpose of keeping the members of the Stamm group in a state of frenzy. To state that "this grouping has revealed a tendency to seek a quick solution of the problem of overcoming its isolation by liquidating Marxism and conciliating with opportunism" (May 7, 1938 issue of "Revolt"), without as much letting the workers know where Oehler's liquidation of Marxism lies, is in itself nothing less than opportunism on the part of the Stamm group.

The Stamm group has up to date not separated itself from the fundamental opportunist political positions of Oehler, which would make its separate existence justifiable. (It proved interesting, how, during the Czechoslovakian crisis the positions of Oehler and Stamm proved so identical, so that the reader wondered whether he was reading the Stamm or Oehler paper) The very same issue of the "Revolt" acknowledges this fact when it says:

"It (the Stamm group-mine) is the legitimate representative of the Marxist traditions of the League and its programmatic positions."

That is, the Stamm group, in splitting from Oehler, is not discarding the principles on which the Oehler group has stood in the past and stands today. If this alone were not sufficient to designate its bankruptcy, the Stamm group has, since its split with Oehler, taken over certain positions which place it even to the right of the Oehler group.

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Economism is the word that can best describe the Stamm group's organ, "Revolt". The magazine devotes most of its attention to the economic field, thus relating the struggles in the Cigars Workers Union, Auto Union, etc.- something befitting a trade union paper. Whenever "Revolt" does have an article on a political question, the politics presented is mainly from a trade union standpoint, similar to a trade union paper inserting a political item here and there. In this manner the Stamm group has degenerated to the level of the Russian Economists, who, like Stamm, used politics not as a lever for the capture of state power, but for the realization of the economic demands. (See What's To Be Done? by Lenin)

Whereas the accusation that the Oehler group is "seeking a quick solution of the problem of overcoming its isolation by liquidating Marxism" is correct, nevertheless, it must be said that it was the same isolationist feat that was responsible for the sudden adoption of Economism by the Stamm group. Not having any political program different from the Oehlerites, the Stamm group could not make to the political field. To keep the group together, and to emerge from their isolationism, Stamm made an opportunist jump to the masses by discarding the standard Marxist postulate that economic struggles are subordinated to the political struggles and must be treated as such.

Flowing directly out of its Economist line, we witness the latest opportunist manner in which the Stamm group "attacks" the Trotskyists. The Stamm "attack" against Trotskyism is not due out of deep, political differences it has with the former, since in the first place it has nothing of the sort, and, in the second place, it has no desire and cannot, because of its Economist approach, deal with Trotskyism politically. Trotskyism does not go to the masses, Trotskyism is sectarian,



Trotskyism has no following and finally, the most important accusation, that the Trotskyist opportunism is due to its anti-Stalinist approach. The supposition here is that, were Trotskyism to discard its anti-Stalinist approach the knell of opportunism within the Trotskyist camp would be sounded- a supposition basically false- a supposition which can only have as its consequence the fusion of the Stammites with the Trotskyists, once, in the opinion of Stamm, the Trotskyists begin to orientate independently towards the working class.

### League for a Revolutionary Workers Party (Fieldites)

This grouping exists for the sole purpose of fusion. Its existence is not predicated upon the growth of its own organization and the emergence of the Revolutionary Workers Party, as a result of this independent growth, which is made possible by the breaking up and weakening of the other tendencies in the labor movement. The road towards the new, revolutionary, Marxian Party is viewed by the Field group as resulting in the fusion of what it terms, "the Fourth International tendencies". Thus, the emergence of the new Party, according to the Field view, is made possible by two roads, neither of which is subordinated to the other: independent activity among the masses, and, merger with other political groups. As we shall see later, these two roads in essence, both put on an equal plane, for building a Party, reduce themselves in action to one road, namely, the organic unity road, and constitutes another form of accepting the Trotskyist French Turn.

Trotskyism, as we already know, also presented in the past two roads for building the New International. The first was by liquidation into the Socialist Parties, and, the second, wherever the Trotskyist organizations were strong, by fusion with left-centrist political organizations. Field's line for building the New International is a left variation of the French Turn. Rejecting the French Turn in words, he nevertheless accepts the second method of Trotskyism, which as we shall see later, only complements the first and in no way contradicts the French Turn as a whole.

Different political groupings, by maintaining their independence for any lengthy period of time, express different political tendencies within the labor movement. The fusion of two organizations indicates that both are of the same tendency. The building of the Marxist Party and the New, Marxist International must consequently represent a struggle against other political organizations, since their independent existence expresses hostile tendencies to the one organization or tendency which seeks to build this new Marxist Party and International. The Field group does not, by its desire to build the new Party through fusion with different organizations, recognize the truth of the above thesis. It is the failure to understand the above point that brings it to the acceptance of the French Turn through a rear door.

The acceptance of the principle of the independence of the Marxist organization is based on the assumption that the proletariat could successfully overthrow capitalism, only if this Marxist organization, through its independent activity in the class, obtains the leadership over the class. We can state categorically: that were the main activity of the Marxist organization not directed to the class as a whole, there would be no necessity of maintaining the independence of the organization a question of principle. The main activity of the Field

group, which calls itself the Marxist organization, is not directed to the class. Its activity is divided equally into two parts: part of the activity for independent work among the class and part for fusion negotiations with other organizations. This concept violates the Marxist understanding of what is meant by the independence of the organization. It constitutes a reconciliation with the Trotskyist viewpoint on organization.

The Trotskyist French Turn is due precisely to its past misunderstanding as to what constitutes the primary work of a Marxist organization. For years it has tried to reconcile independent activity among the class with fusion activity. For a period it may have seemed that Trotskyism had at last diverted its main energy to independent work among the class, only to realize later that this activity in class struggle activity was a period which awaited a new fusion. The Field group's latest activity in class struggle work is due to the fact that no prospect for fusion has arisen, and, as such constitutes only an artificial adaptation to independent activity. The Field group by refusing to make independent work in the class struggle or among the class the primary course for building the new Party has to logically make fusion negotiations the only real line on which its organization is founded. Just as the Trotskyist' two roads for building the new Party turned out to be one road- the liquidationist road- so does the similar concept of Field of two roads, turn out in essence, to be one road- the fusion road.

That is why Field, can, in an article on "The Road to the Party" write this opportunist piece:

"It is necessary to attract to the group on the road to a party not only raw workers, new to the movement, on the basis of our activity in mass organizations, but also political labor organizations."

And which political organizations are had in mind? The Fieldites of Canada answer clearly:

"On the other hand, we still agree with Trotsky on most principled questions and to a large extent we still base ourselves on his teachings. There still remains the possibility of collaborating with the Trotskyists in the work of organizing the Fourth International." (From the Pre-Convention Discussion Material of the LRWF)

For the first time the Fieldites themselves have admitted what we often accused them to be: left-Trotskyists. Their difference with Trotskyism is ostensibly over the French Turn. But even on this question there is no real, fundamental difference as we have shown above. Despite the recent loud acclamations by the Fieldites, that they have finally and irrevocably broken with the Trotskyites, that Trotskyism cannot be reformed and must be smashed, the fact remains that the leader of the Canadian Fieldites, Krehm, was forced to admit that they "still agree with Trotsky on most principled questions" and base themselves on his teachings. This, together with the statement by Field that "with regard to groups occupying a general revolutionary position but incorrect on certain fundamentals, our effort must be to win them over to a basic political agreement on the basis on which merger would then be possible (Ibid), makes it very clear that the Field group still nourishes the idea of someday fusing with the Trotskyists. For the fact is that they "still agree with Trotsky on most principled questions", and that signifies to the Fieldites that the Trotskyists "occupy a general revolutionary position", and hence "merger would then be possible". The

recent protestations against Trotskyism by Field has as its sole purpose the quieting of Field's followers who are becoming increasingly nervous over the leader's flirtations with the Trotsky group.

The organic unity line of Field becomes particularly clear when the question of building the New International is taken up. Field's line for building the Fourth International consists in summoning an international conference of all parties and groups which speak for a new international- something which he erroneously calls a New Zimmerwald- and at this conference take steps to found the international.

This conference would include the Trotskyists, POUM, the Revolutionary Socialist Party of Holland and other centrist parties who belong to the London-Amsterdam Buro. Instead of explaining to the workers, that no summoning of a thousand conferences which include such treacherous opportunist parties will add an ounce of strength to the movement for a new Marxist international, the Field group keeps on its old song about the sectarianism of a Fourth International if those "new international tendencies" were excluded. As if we at any time proposed to establish the Fourth International with our limited numbers!! What we do say, contrary to Field's line, is that tendencies like our own will have to grow and become Parties in the various countries of the world if the Fourth International will ever be established. But one thing remains clear: no Marxist international can be established by including such opportunist parties and groups, including the Field group.

The fact that Field is, on occasions, willing to sign his name to a statement which reiterates the Leninist contention that centrism cannot be reformed, must not be taken to mean that in action he executes the signed policy. The Field group is capable of signing anything on paper; but at no time will it actually divert from its organic unity (with centrists) goal. The mere fact that the Field group agreed to designate the POUM as centrist, did not mean that it gave up all hopes of bringing the POUM around to a revolutionary policy. It collected money for the POUM, an act which undoubtedly has political implications. That recently the Field group has had to tone down in its praise for the POUM is a result of the too open treachery of the POUM in the May 3 Barcelona uprising.

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Since the Fieldites themselves admit that they "still agree with Trotskyism on most principled questions" we will therefore not bother to attack the Field positions as we already have attacked the Trotskyist line. In the main, the Fieldites, though agreeing fundamentally with the Trotskyists, always manage to criticize the Trotskyists on this or that trivial point. In their manner of grappling with political questions, they come very, very close to the Oehlerites. There certainly seem to be no deep fundamental differences which would prevent a fusion between the Oehlerites and Fieldites.

THE LENINIST LEAGUE (MARLINITES)

The thing which distinguishes Marlenism in particular is its basic anti-Stalinist approach. Anti-Stalinist agitation forms the dominant part of its work. This anti-Stalinism, which does not act as a consequence to a basic anti-capitalist approach, reflects itself in the writings of the Marlen group.

In a magazine of 60 pages devoted to the French situation, the first eleven pages are spent in relating the fact that Lenin left a testament, which Trotsky violated, in describing the Bureaucratic distortion of the Russian state; the betrayals of the Stalinists in China, the manoeuvres of the Browder gang in the United States and many other crimes which the Stalinists have committed outside France. Finally, when the author gets down to touch the French question, the reader becomes astonished at the introduction of a new subject, having been under the impression all along that the title, "Whither France" was meant for another cover. But those who are already acquainted with Marlen's writings, they of course skipped the first eleven pages and proceeded to see what Marlen's opinions were on the French situation. But alas, they were dismayed. Marlen is not the least interested in explaining to the workers the economic situation in France, which gave rise to the political crisis, the role of Bonapartism, the role of the peasantry, the General Strike and the character of the Daladier regime. Instead, French events are approached from the anti-Stalinist view. France is handled in so far as it affects the Stalinists, in so far as an expose of the Stalinists is permitted.

The same is true of all the writings of the Marlen group. The necessity for clarifying the workers to the manoeuvres of the capitalists, which is of prime importance, since the workers are embodied with capitalist ideology, is shoved to the background. Instead, the Marlen group concentrates all its fire on an expose of the Stalinists, which as much as it is needed, can only be carried out successfully once their masters, the bourgeoisie, are first discredited.

Thus whereas the main activity of Marxists lies in the class struggle, in combatting the capitalist class, the main, if not entire activity of the Marlen group finds its expression in anti-Stalinist propaganda. The Marlen group thereby fails to realize that a successful struggle against Stalinism as well as the other opportunist currents within the labor movement can only be carried out successfully if the main blows of the revolutionists are struck at the capitalist system itself, from where these labor-fakers stem. The Marlen group is busy cutting down the twigs, Stalinism, whereas it will really never do away with those ugly twigs unless the roots of the tree, capitalism, are undermined.

Hence when the Marlen group says that "among the Chinese masses, the chief obstacle along the road to proletarian revolution is Stalinism" (Nov. 1938 issue of 'In Defense of Bolshevism') it is only restating the central theme of its line. As evident as it is that the bourgeois Chiang Kai-Shek government must be the target of attack by the Chinese proletariat, Marlenism will deny the obvious. As clear as it may be that the central enemy of the French workers is the French bourgeoisie, Marlen will claim that Stalinism is. It is therefore very amusing when Marlen attacks the third-period Stalinists for having said that "to beat the enemy, the bourgeoisie, we must direct the main blow...against the chief enemy of Communism in the working class, against Social-Democracy". For doesn't the Marlen group say the very same thing in reverse? Doesn't the Marlen group advocate to level the "main blow" against Stalinism in order to beat the bourgeoisie? It is clear that the Marlen position is the old third-period Stalinist position in reverse.

This false relationship between the Marxist organization and the working class which the Marlen group has established must unavoidably lead it to becoming a left opposition or a left flank to the Stalinists. Revolving its activities around the Stalinist Party, the Marlen group sort of lives on the former's back. Should the Communist Party die, the Marlen



group will die with it. Should Stalin be overthrown and Stalinism disappear, the Marlen group will disappear with it, since its existence is based on the existence of Stalinism. Thus the basis for existence of the Marlen group is not the Marxist one, to overthrow capitalism, but to expose Stalinism.

The Marlen group has therefore not any reason for holding that the independence of its organization is a question of principle. As we already have stated before, the chief reason for considering the independence of the Marxist organization a question of principle, is based on the idea that the revolutionists need their independence in order to prevent the opportunists from stifling their voices, which must be heard by the class. The revolutionists need their independence in order to go to the masses and lead them in their class battles against capitalism. Once, however, it is claimed that the task of a revolutionary group is to organize its main activity around the expose of Stalinism, or for this matter, another opportunist current within the labor movement, then the basis for considering the independence of the organization a question of principle is completely taken away. Tomorrow the Marlen group may find that the best anti-Stalinist work could be undertaken if the majority of its membership were sent into the Stalinist Party, which, for all practical purposes would amount to liquidation.

Let us not forget that the Trotskyist liquidation into the Socialist Party had its birth in the fact that Trotskyism for years revolved its main activities around the Stalinist Party, getting so accustomed to revolving around an oponent organization that it proved too hard for it to make a sudden turn to the masses. Marlen's concept of infecting oneself into the class struggle consists in winning over enough members from the Communist Party so as to have a force with which to go to the masses. He has not learned anything from the Trotskyist disasters. The way to the masses is from the ground up, bit by bit, to start when one's organization ~~is~~ is yet small. In this manner, mass activity grows upon the organization. To do oponents work for years and then all of a sudden ask the membership, no matter how large it may be, to make a sudden turn towards mass work, is to impose upon the organization new activities for which it was not prepared for in advance. The organization, incapable of making that drastic turn, will unavoidably choose the easier course, i.e., to continue with oponents work, which soon or later leads unavoidably to liquidation.

The Marlen organization is today centralizing its main work around the Stalinists. There will come a time when the membership will have become tired of revolving around the Stalinists, once it has come to the realization that all possibilities of recruiting from that source had become exhausted. Unable to make the turn towards the masses, it will, like the Trotskyists, turn towards another oponent organization and possibly liquidate into it.

Hence it is clear that one of the central aspects of the acceptance of the "French Turn" or the seed out of which liquidation springs, is the refusal to make independent work among the masses the main activity. The Marlen group, by refusing to make independent work among the masses its orientation, accepts the basic premise of the French Turn. The loud protestations which the Marlen group makes against Trotskyist liquidationism are empty phrases, since it must come around the

### Trotskyist position through a different door.

Though Marlen disclaims acceptance of the French Turn by arguing that the Trotskyists stood for the reform of Social-Democracy whereas his group stands for the independence of its organization and for the smashing of both Stalinism and Social-Democracy, it is nevertheless clear that Marlen by arguing so has only understood the final act of the French Turn but has not grasped its origin. Marlen does not bother to find out the whys and wherefores of the Trotskyist liquidationist policy, though he is well aware of the continuity of its centrist line. Were he to bother to examine things he would find that the Trotskyist liquidationism had in its origin in the constant refusal by Trotsky to strike out independently towards the class. The Marlen group cannot possibly show the origin of the Trotskyist liquidationism, for the simple reason that it too accepts one of Trotsky's old positions: the refusal to make independent work among the class primary. But it is precisely this false relation to the class, i.e., the refusal to make class struggle activity the primary work, that forms the core of the French Turn. By accepting this false relationship, the Marlen group accepts the heart of the French Turn.

The mere declaration, therefore, by Marlen against reform of the Socialist and Stalinist Parties does not in itself prove a rejection of the French Turn. Groupings have been known to liquidate into other parties without declaring for the reform of the parties they liquidated into. The organizational act of liquidation carried however, of necessity, the reform perspective with it, since it denied the need for the independent existence of the Marxist force. In order to disprove acceptance of the French Turn it is not sufficient for the Marlen group to prove that it leads an independent organizational existence. What is necessary is for it to show reason for an independent existence. This it cannot show. Only that political organization which makes a direct appeal to the class and enters the class struggle arena to compete with other Parties for influence over the class, can be said to have reason for independent existence. Not having that perspective, the Marlen group has no basis for independent life.

What is to prevent the Marlen group from dissolving into the Communist Party once it has come to the conclusion that more fruitful work could be undertaken from within than from without? Certainly, the fact that these Marlinites would be under Stalinist discipline and prevented from telling non-C.P. workers their views could not be considered by Marlen capitulation, since in his opinion it is not at all necessary to approach the class as a whole.

To what insane dimensions this anti-Stalinist approach could lead a person is to be seen in the following idiotic statement by Marlen:

"The existence of Stalinism within the working class is a guarantee of the victory of fascism." ( Stalin, Trotsky or Lenin, page 477)

Since Marlen compares Kornilov's reactionary movement to fascism ( a false comparison), would Marlen therefore say that the existence of Menshevism within the Russian working class guaranteed the victory of Kornilovism? It is one thing to say that fascism will in the end come out victorious if the proletariat continues to remain under the influence of Stalinism and it is another thing to declare, as Marlen does, that the mere existence of Stalinism within the working class (even though the majority of workers may repudiate it) constitutes a guarantee of fascism.

The Marlinite position on Russia is indicative of the faulty lengths to which one can be drawn once the assumption is made that the Russian proletariat constitutes the ruling class. In his treatment of Russia, Marlen completely revises the materialist concept of history. The cause for the degeneration of the Russian Revolution is viewed by him to be the conspiracy of a few individuals, led by Stalin, to capture power and use it for their personal interests. Discounting Lenin's oft repeated declarations that the Russian workers state could not hold out for long and would, because of failure of the international socialist revolution, finally succumb, Marlen insists that given a correct Marxist-Leninist leadership the Russian proletarian state could not only have survived but could have even become stronger.

"Trotsky and the ultra-lefts who follow him in this make a great noise about the defeat of the proletarian revolution outside of Russia, giving the impression that this made the degeneration of the Russian Communist Party inevitable." (Nov. 1938 issue of "In Defense of Bolshevism, page 13)

According to Marlen, therefore, the degeneration of the Russian Revolution and the Bolshevik Party had nothing to do with the defeat of the world revolution. What then made this degeneration possible?

"The primary cause of a Stalinist degeneration of a proletarian revolution is the abandonment of the Bolshevik organizational principle of democratic centralism by the leadership of the revolutionary Party" (Ibid)

The above method of interpreting history has nothing in common with the Marxist materialistic approach. According to Marlen, the process of degeneration flies out of the blue sky. A few leaders all of a sudden decide to concentrate power in their hands, violate democratic centralism, and the degeneration begins. What, however, makes possible the bureaucratic distortion, Marlen does not explain. He divides the distortion of the Russian state into two parts. "The original bureaucratic distortion of the workers state was caused primarily by the extreme cultural backwardness of the Russian proletariat." (Ibid, page 11, emphasis in original) The second distortion, is due to what he terms the conscious violation of democratic centralism by the Stalin clique.

What Marlen fails to see is that Stalinism built its foundation upon this cultural backwardness; that the wresting of power from the proletariat did not have its origin in the mere decision by the Stalin-Zinoviev-Kamenev clique to violate democratic centralism. Their violation of democratic centralism was made possible because the proletariat was too weak to prevent it. And why was it too weak to prevent it? Because the backwardness of Russia, which gave the country a small proletariat of about three million surrounded by a petty-bourgeois peasantry of over a hundred million, and consequently gave the proletariat a low cultural level, offered Stalinism the objective pre-requisite for victory. So where on one hand Marlen admits that the original distortion of the workers state had its origin in the backwardness of the country, he refuses to see that the Stalinist degeneration of the Russian State was made possible because the first distortion paved the ground for it.

Marlen sees two processes, two separate distortions, neither having anything to do with the other. We see the Stalinist acquisition of power a continuation and logical development of the original distortion, which was caused not only by the backwardness of the country, but primarily by the failure of the international revolution.

Notice Marlen's non-materialistic method of discussing the relation between the subjective and objective factors:

"If the revolutionary party remains Marxist-Leninist to the last, the bureaucratic distortion will be overcome regardless of the backwardness or advancement of a country." (Ibid- page 18)

The leadership decides to remain Marxist-Leninist and everything must go well, so claims Marlen. But what if the counter-revolutionary current, caused by the failure of the international revolution and the backwardness of the country, overthrows the Marxist leadership which holds the reins of the state? Or is that not at all likely to Marlen? In fact, it is not only likely but most assured. Failure of the international socialist revolution to come guarantees the victory of capitalism, no matter how Marxist-Leninist the leadership of a single workers state may be. That was Lenin's thought. That forms our thought. If one denies this thought, as Marlen does, then one cannot honestly oppose the Stalinist theory of building socialism in one country. For the Stalinist "socialism in one country" theory is based on Marlen's assumptions: that the workers state can progress towards socialism regardless of the failure of the international revolution or the backwardness of the country.

Neither does Marlen take into account the influence of objective conditions over a Marxist leadership. Stalin, who once upon a time was a revolutionist, did not embrace counter-revolution because there was something in his nature which urged him to do so. Objective Russian conditions were favorable to the development of a counter-revolutionary clique. They found their man in Stalin. Objective conditions contributed very much to the discarding of Marxism by the majority of the Bolshevik Party leadership.

Of course, Marlen's theory is a product of his confusion on the class character of the Russian state. Starting from the false premise that the abolition of private ownership makes Russia a proletarian state, Marlen is then forced to seek reasons other than economic in order to explain why Stalinism has degenerated the proletarian dictatorship. He does not care to analyze the Russian collectives and show how they function on capitalist relationships. He does not care to show why when "a worker gets 200 rubles a month" while a "bureaucrat is hogging 2000" (Stalin, Trotsky or Lenin, page 337) that equals capitalist exploitation. The fact, as Marlen himself admits, that "the bureaucratic caste has acquired full sway over State property" and "is amassing private property in the form of bonds, bank deposits, jewels, automobiles, houses" (Ibid, page 330) while the workers starve, does not show capitalist exploitation to Marlen. Since Marlen refuses to show the degeneration of the Russian Revolution in the capitalist exploitation of the Russian workers, he is forced to show it in other derivative spheres. Thus he picks on the violation of democratic centralism to illustrate where the core of the degeneration lies. Other people who agree with Marlen on the proletarian character of the Russian state, may perhaps show the degeneration to lie somewhere else. Everyone with his own pet theory may pick another spot. But none of them dare to explain that having lost political power, the state, the proletariat lost the economy, since the ownership of the means of production was vested in the state.

KARL MIENOV  
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Note: As we go to press, we come across the latest Oehlerite magazine which declares affiliation to IAG a violation of principle. It does not explain why yesterday it was considered a question of tactic. Like the Stalinists, new positions are established without repudiation of past.

# SPAIN'S BITTER LESSONS

The Spanish war is in its last phase. Complete victory for the fascists now is only a question of time, as the Loyalists apparently remain helpless before the onslaughts of Franco. Despite the inevitable cessation of the military conflict in Spain that must come very soon, the 2 1/2 year combat on the Iberian Peninsula has been as momentous as was the World War in thrusting forth questions of vital importance which have served to demarcate various tendencies into definite political categories. False positions, held latent because positive stands on certain questions were not demanded, were brought out in bold relief in various organizations during the course of the war. And tho the battle draws to a close, and even when its conclusion shall be reached, those false positions taken on the war proper will persist and express themselves in different situations, which are in the immediate offing. Thus it is essential to understand these important lessons of Spain in the present moment in order to be capable of undertaking correct action in the future.

With this in mind, the MARXIST WORKERS LEAGUE, upon its formation, which was caused directly by the Spanish war, stated that Spain did not merely involve the question of the military struggle alone, for then that would merely constitute a tactic; ie: the form of the pursuance of the war and not its actual content, but instead the question involved having a Marxist position, or an incorrect one on the army, the state, war, democracy against fascism, and an understanding of the economic structure of capitalism. All of these questions were outgrowths of the war and to be incorrect on the war, meant to be incorrect on all of these positions. The future world war that capitalism will engage in, has its supporters already at their posts, at which they have stood most diligently during the Spanish episode. Most political organizations the world over have supported the war, and thus have degenerated political into social patriots, a deplorable state of affairs indeed, when one considers that some support it in the name of Leninism. But every break must have a new beginning; every thesis its antithesis. And just as the World War set the stage for the collapse of the Second International, Lenin, while the workers still remained deluded by the social-patriots, was already calling for a Third International- was demarcating the Marxists from the centrists and reformists. Only a handful opposed the last imperialist war. The capitalist current carries its lackeys and critics, who oppose it in words but support it in action, along in its powerful onrush toward destruction of human life. Only the Marxists dare to keep swimming upstream, and continue to feel that at last the oppressed will follow their example and help turn the tide the other way until humanity is finally liberated. Persistently, we will point out the bitter lessons of Spain, in order to clarify the correct ones, in order to recreate an October 1917, and from there on to advance steadily forward.

## WAR

We have called the Spanish conflict an imperialist war. Let us see what we mean by that term, so that we may clarify the premise from which we begin. Imperialist war signifies a war on the part of the capitalist class for economic aggrandizement in which the workers are fighting and dying merely for the material benefit of the capitalist class under whose banner they fight. Our opponents, among whom are in-



cluded such reformists as the Stalinists and Socialists, centrists like the Trotskyites, and left centrists like the Ochlerites, Fieldites, etc. all claim that the Spanish war is a civil war, should be supported, but they differ only as to how that support should be given and to whom. The latter factor does not concern us, for we desire to polemicise against the premise, i.e., that the war is a civil war, and disproving this, we need not discuss the question of support for we are unalterably opposed to imperialist war.

Our opponents contend that the war is a civil war for the following reasons. First, it is claimed that the war is a civil war because it is being fought within the boundaries of a limited geographical unit—a nation—it is not being fought between nations. But that definition of a civil war is the ordinary bourgeois classification and not a Marxian one. We do not, in order to determine the character of a war limit ourselves to determining the geographical factors, the artificial boundaries set up by capitalism, nor do we concern ourselves especially with ethnical matters. As our yardstick, we use the economic standard. No matter what the geographical distinctions are, whether the war is fought in the wastelands of the Sahara, whether in the cold north of Alaska, on sea, land, or in the air; whether the war is confined to a definite location because of mountains, rivers, or man's artificial barriers—what concerns us most is which economic class leads that war and which economic class benefits as a result. The war of 1861 in the U.S. was a civil war, not because it was fought within the boundaries of the country, but because it was fought between two economic classes—the slaveholding and the rising bourgeoisie. The French Revolution was a civil war because it represented the struggle of the feudals against the victorious bourgeoisie—the Paris Commune and the October Revolution in Russia represented civil wars because they were wars fought between two economic classes—the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. The numerous wars that occurred during the Medieval period between feudal lords did not constitute civil wars, no matter the location of the struggles. Nor do present day struggles between the same economic group, within or outside of the country constitute a civil war even though fought within the bounds of one locality.

Is an economy attempting to displace another one in Spain? No, for the war merely is fought with bourgeois property rights respected and maintained on both sides. It is a struggle within one economy—to see who shall rule over the whole nation's same economy—bourgeois economy. Who is leading the war—which economic group; in whose interests is that economic group leading the war? On both sides a section of the Spanish capitalist class lead and direct the war. On both sides the war is fought in the interests of those who lead it—the bourgeoisie. Then, why is the war being fought? For the very same reason that every imperialist war is fought—for profits—for capitalist interests. In all societies where exploitation of man by man was the rule, the rulers have struggled for the economic factors in that society. Under the classical slave economy, they struggled for slaves and gold and silver. Under feudalism for serfs and land. Under capitalism for territory—for investments, for productive purposes, and for markets. Thus it is an imperialist war because it is lead, prosecuted in the interests of the bourgeoisie—the Spanish bourgeoisie which is now divided and struggling for hegemony—at the price of workers' shedding their blood for both sides, so that after the war is over, they might slave for the

victorious bourgeoisie!

The reason for the confusion on the geographical factor in relation to determining the character of a war is due to the fact that previously there has been no case in history where an imperialist war occurred within the bounds of one country. Being confronted with this for the first time, many became confused and instead of attempting to understand the new phenomenon, started from the popular notion that the war was a civil war, and produced their left and right deviations on this false premise.

How important is this false analysis due to geography? Its American translation from the Spanish may easily be made, if for example there would occur a war in America between two financial oligarchies, say for example, between the Rockefeller and Morgan groups. And this is not at all excluded, in fact quite possible (for example, the Trotzkites in their "Principles and Declarations of the Socialist Workers Party envisage such a war." "The attitude toward analagous civil wars (like the Spanish War-my own) in other countries, including the U.S., which involved a fascist and a bourgeois democratic camp, would be the same: all technical and military support in the joint struggle against fascism is an inseparable part of the preparation for the socialist revolution."-p.27). Here the Trotzkites, as all other groups who support the Spanish imperialist war, would in the event of such a war in the U.S. between two imperialist gangs, support either one (no doubt the one with the more demagogic appeal)-and this they mockingly say, just as they will say, "is an inseparable part of the preparation for the socialist revolution". Again the arguments that the war would be a civil war because it would be fought within one locality would be raised; once again the social-patriots would flock to honeyed phrases of the bourgeoisie in support of the bourgeois oppression of the proletariat.

The next argument that the war in Spain is a civil war, is that the proletariat must protect themselves against the fascist hordes, and that it is better to suffer under bourgeois democracy, than to be utterly crushed under the heel of fascism. First let us state that under the Spanish Popular Front democracy was allowed only to those who supported the government and revolutionists who opposed the Popular Front were jailed, imprisoned and shot. But granting the fact that "democracy" in relation to the bourgeoisie is granted, does that mean that we term the war a civil war and thus support it? We will take this topic up in greater detail later in the article, but for the present let us state that we do not pose the question-against whom are we fighting-the fascists-therefore all support to those who are leading the struggle against fascism. Who are we fighting for and for what-that is the decisive question! Do we lose our blood for one master so that he may have more slaves to rule? Is not fight fascism (without giving it an anti-capitalist base) the same as fight for democracy that democracy which the capitalist class gives-the right to starve for workers who struggle for the liberation to be clubbed, jailed, and killed? What does it matter to the slave the master he is given as long as he is a slave, and a slave he will remain when he follows the slogan-fight for democracy-for then he supports the "democratic" tyrant who by phrases blinds him and then tortures him. Instead of "hang the kaiser", the slogan of the "good" tyrants has been changed to "hang Hitler and Mussolini", and along with this the fake slogan fight for democracy has been changed to fight fascism-a new form of

the same content.

After stating that the workers must protect themselves against fascism, and therefore that the workers in protecting their organizations are fighting for themselves, and therefore are engaged in a civil war, the theoreticians delve into history and bring forth the Kornilov Days in August 1917 as a precedent for their support of the present Spanish imperialist war. Lenin supported that war when he fought with Kerensky (comparable to the Popular Front), against Kornilov (comparable to the fascists), they hurl at us, and therefore the present Spanish imperialist war, is a civil war and demands our support. Time and again we have pointed out that the Kornilov Days in Russia are comparable to the Spanish war only in the latter's earliest phases when the workers set up embryonic dual power in the form of soviets. At that time the workers fought not only against Franco, but likewise made inroads upon bourgeois property in Loyalist territory. And what is most important and comparable to the Kornilov Days is that the workers maintained their own independent organs—in Russia the Bolshevik Party which led the way for independent activity—activity in the interests of the proletariat. In Spain, the independent activity was manifested in the form of the Anti-Fascist Militia which directed the workers in the front and the rear, composed of workers' organizations separate and apart from the bourgeois Popular Front which was indeed impotent during this early period of the conflict. Beside their independent militia, the workers maintained their own military tribunals, controlled factories, and in general used their growing power to exert limitations upon the bourgeoisie. An inevitable stripping of all power of the Loyalist bourgeoisie would have had to take place if the Anti-Fascist militia would have proceeded along the road it started upon. But a few months after the war began the anti-fascist militia was liquidated and the decisive civil war content taken away when all workers' independent action occurred and the Loyalist bourgeoisie seized full control over the reins of government and transformed the war into an imperialist war—a war in the interests of the bourgeoisie.

No longer did it possess a comparison to the Kornilov Days, for the class struggle (the basic struggle of proletariat against bourgeoisie in this society) had been liquidated. Independent action of the proletariat having ceased, the struggle of the proletariat against the capitalist class disappeared, its replacement by the conflict of bourgeoisie against bourgeoisie had to occur.

Every conflict of a military character is made up of class content. The content of the Kornilov Days was class struggle content—the workers fighting independently in their own interests against Kornilov at the front, while making inroads at the rear in bourgeois property, and because of their independent class action developing a line of struggle which eventually had to set the stage for the showdown with Kerensky. In Spain, although the content of the struggle at the beginning represented a class struggle against Franco, and at the same time that it represented the pushing forward of the class struggle in the rear, once the workers' independence had been liquidated, once the bourgeoisie had seized hegemony of the war by dissolving the embryonic soviets and by the process of transforming the workers' militia into a bourgeois army and in general seizing back all the

losses they had suffered at the beginning of the war at the hands of the proletariat, the Loyalist capitalist class deflected the class struggle (again the struggle of the proletariat against the bourgeoisie) into one of bourgeoisie against bourgeoisie. As long as the class struggle is uppermost in any conflict the bourgeoisie cannot pursue the war in their own interests until the class struggle has been subordinated, i.e., supplanted by class collaboration—the struggle of bourgeoisie against bourgeoisie with the proletariat serving as cannon fodder.

Let us make this theoretical formulation more concrete. If, for example, the U.S. desired to go to war against another bourgeois nation, it could not effectively do this, if a revolution occurred here. What would have to be done first, would be to crush the struggle in America of worker against bourgeois, so that the bourgeoisie would be able to send the workers to battle for them—drive the workers off their class struggle axis on to the plane of class collaboration. Even if there were seizures of factories in the rear on a fairly large scale, the U.S. could not effectively carry on their imperialist conflict, until the workers had effectively been crushed, made to fight for one bourgeoisie against the other instead of against their oppressors. And once the question of class struggle in the rear is posed, while the bourgeoisie are carrying on their own war at the front, one of necessity must displace the other, one must become uppermost and determine in this way the class content of the struggle which will prevail. For once the class struggle begins to grow alongside with the imperialist conflict, the irreconcilability of both must give way to open battle, and eventual triumph of one over the other.

If the bourgeoisie succeeds in suppressing the workers rather easily (dislodging them from factories, liquidating their independent organs, etc.) then the bourgeoisie may be capable of continuing their imperialist war, by the complete pushing of the workers along class collaborationist lines. But should the class struggle in the rear reach any sizeable proportions, it would immediately and directly effect the prosecution of the war at the front. The bourgeoisie would then call for all support to the front, and the ceasing of class conflict in the rear, so that the "enemy" country might first be crushed. If the workers consent to this appeal of their masters, the class struggle in the rear is then given up and is replaced by class collaboration (Miliukov in Russia in 1917 along with Kerensky attempted to do this, but failed because of the Bolshevik class line that was immovable in the face of bourgeois hypocrisy. In Spain, unfortunately, the Anti-Fascist Militia succumbed to the demogogy of the Popular Front to fight fascism, and thus the class struggle became liquidated).

If appeals to the workers on false slogans does not succeed, the bourgeoisie then resorts to open, suppressive action. Let us consider as a fine example that the Spanish war presented to us in the form of the Barcelona May Days. The upshot of the conflict was the attempt by the bourgeoisie to regain an important telephone building which the workers had succeeded in procuring during the class struggle days of the Spanish war. Preceding this, the bourgeoisie had seized hegemony over the war, had already begun its persecution of revolutionists, and now were in the process of finally breaking the back of the workers—taking away everything which the workers had seized at the beginning of the war. When the bourgeoisie attempted to oust the workers from the build-

ing, the latter immediately set up barricades and for about four days staved off the attack of the Popular Front, which finally ejected the workers after killing many, and then seized control of the building.

During the battle, the bourgeoisie raised the cry that the war against fascism was being disrupted at the front. At the same time, the Anarchist and PCUM (Workers Party of Marxist Unification) leaders backed up the claim of the bourgeoisie, and demanded that their members (who comprised the majority of the workers involved in the May Days) cease fighting and give up the building (At this time members of the Anarchists were in the government). In order to suppress the Barcelona uprising, the Popular Front withdrew some soldiers from the front, weakening the struggle against Franco its opponent bourgeois faction, to suppress the greater danger in the rear: workers revolution. Also during the Spanish conflict, the Popular Front had used sabotage on the Aragon Front and other places where the revolutionary workers dominated in order to oust them from control, even while weakening their fight against fascism. In other words, while the leaders of the workers put uppermost the slogan of fight fascism first, the bourgeoisie, far wiser, considered the class struggle as being more dangerous than the struggle against their opposing capitalists.

The workers, if they were to carry the Barcelona struggle further, and if it would have spread to the whole city, and caused armed conflict between the capitalists and workers, would have had to extend its military operations against the front that was under the control of the Bourgeois People's Front army. In other words, the class struggle content would have displaced the class collaborationists front. The class struggle front would have been at the place where the workers were struggling against the bourgeoisie, around Barcelona and would have been forced to struggle for hegemony over the existing capitalist front. In any case, both could not have existed for any great length of time.

We may extend our hypothesis. If the Barcelona struggle had continued what would those elements who support the Spanish war and who call for a proletarian dictatorship, have done? If aid had been given to the Barcelona workers, it would have disrupted the struggle at the front and would have caused a weakening of that front, in fact, probably a unity of the opposing bourgeois factions to crush the workers uprising, similar to what occurred after the Franco-Prussian War in 1871 when the Paris Commune was drowned in blood by the then recently hostile French and Prussian bourgeoisie. In order to have extended the Barcelona struggle, a break from the capitalist front would have had to be called, a break from acting as cannon fodder for the bourgeoisie, and to support the class struggle in Barcelona. In other words, a complete break from the imperialist front into a civil war front would necessarily have to be the slogan. Down with the imperialist war, long live the revolution would have had to be the living cry. The bourgeoisie realized the danger in the rear. They crushed the class struggle. To be successful the class struggle of the workers had to crush all of Spanish capitalism represented at the imperialist front in order to realize a workers Spain.



What are the implications of the false position of civil war on this question? First of all, those who acted as social-patriots in the Spanish debacle, will, to be logical, have to carry out their same line of support to a democratic bourgeoisie like the United States, Great Britain, or France, if these nations should go to war against the fascist nations. Again the cry would be-fight fascism, support democracy. What would be forgotten of course would be that the workers again would be shedding their blood-for capitalism, for their oppressors so that they might be more firmly bound to the auction block of capitalist slavery. We must point out the fakery of the abstract anti-fascist slogan. Revolutionary defeatism-the military defeat of our own army in order to facilitate revolution in the rear must be the rallying cry for workers. Our enemy is at home, the democratic oppressors; let us deal with them first as the initial step in the direction of world revolution-and the establishment of socialism throughout the world!

### CAPITALIST DEMOCRACY VS. FASCISM

This aspect of the struggle in Spain, has been perhaps the most important in gaining support of labor throughout the world for the Loyalist capitalist class. Of course democracy against fascism has had other forms previously to the Spanish imperialist war. One need only to recall the World War and its slogan of "make the world safe for democracy" to ascertain this fact. Again the workers were made numb by the emotional hysteria of imperialist war-mongers. Another world war is being prepared under the guise of this same slogan, but now with the emphasis on the negative side-"stop fascism".

If we say that the Spanish war was one of democracy against fascism, with the bourgeoisie leading and prosecuting that war, then we are forced to state that the Spanish bourgeoisie of the Loyalist brand have been pursuing the war for ideological reasons, in order to preserve the workers' organizations, in order to preserve democracy for the masses, and for all this the bourgeoisie goes to war, threatens its status in society at the risk of losing all to the opponents, threatens its industrial plants and various other profit enterprises, and finally even its life. In effect it means that the class struggle does not exist any more when the bourgeoisie is confronted with the issue of democracy, for then the bourgeoisie is willing to advance the interests of the workers, at the price of war. It means that the bourgeoisie, in this stage of declining capitalism, will even to the extent of forsaking its profits, fight any opposing section of the capitalist class, merely to preserve democracy. The cat and the bird have been reconciliated; the shark now kisses a man's body which has been trapped in the water, rather than eating it; the hungry, savage lion licks a man's face rather than tearing it to pieces! Such things have come to pass between slave and master, if we are to believe that the bourgeoisie will fight to preserve democracy, or any other ideological form of government. So too do the slaves under various totalitarian forms of government believe that wars are fought to protect them. Franco, Hitler and Musxolini tell the enslaved workers and peasants that they are fighting for the national honor of the country. In both cases-among the democratic and fascist bourgeoisie, ideological reasons are given as the motive for struggling in warfare-for the workers sacrificing their lives. Let us rip away this ideological curtain which shelters the bourgeoisie's nefarious schemes and expose the machinations of these crafty enslavers to the light of day-before

Bourgeois democracy, such as we have in the United States, France and England, exists under a capitalist economy, which is strong enough to grant what we call democracy—freedom of speech, workers' right to organize, etc. This the capitalist class allows because its economy is strong enough to allow certain freedoms of the workers' to exist. Of course, because of the very existence of the capitalist system it is impossible to grant democracy since the workers are limited in their use of the press, radio, meeting halls, etc. by the capitalists, who, controlling these branches of communications, either charge exorbitant rates for their use (above the means of workers' organizations) or openly refuse to allow workers' propaganda to be disseminated. Then when the workers become militant in strikes and other economic warfare with the bourgeoisie, the latter bring in their state machinery to suppress the workers—army, courts, etc. Despite these and other limitations, too numerous to go into now (we urge for the reader who may be introduced into this topic for the first time a digestion of Lenin's "State and Revolution"), the bourgeois democratic government still grants more leeway for workers' demands to be heard than the fascists allow, the latter suppressing completely the workers' organs and expressions. But fascism arose out of the womb of bourgeois democracy; it springs from the same soil—the capitalist system. When bourgeois democracy is no longer able to hold the discontented masses in check, because of the decadent state of capitalism which has caused the workers to rise, bourgeois democracy must take away every semblance of any relative expression that the workers previously have been able to wrest from it, and save itself by openly suppressing the workers—instituting fascism. The capitalist class is reluctant to institute fascism, because of the maintenance of a heavy state bureaucracy that is necessary to subdue the workers (this is especially true in the industrially advanced countries where a large proletariat necessitates a huge bureaucracy). Also, as is seen in the present fascist states, the bourgeoisie is reluctant to transfer the power to the fascist hordes because it prevents the capitalist class from wielding the political power directly. However, faced with the alternative of fascism or workers' rule it resorts to the former. Fascism and bourgeois democracy, thus illustrate two political expressions of the same economic system. That system is the basis of both, and not until that system is uprooted and destroyed, so long does humanity continue its tread toward human extinction.

Thus, when bourgeois democracy struggles against fascism, it is the same economic system that it combats (for economic not ideological reasons), but with the bourgeoisie divided into nations or as in Spain, the bourgeoisie divided among themselves within a country. In Spain, the real question at issue is not whether to institute a democratic or fascist regime. The contending bourgeois factions are fighting for economic dominance. The Loyalist bourgeoisie would be ready to accept fascism, for their economic benefit as they today accept bourgeois democracy (ever since the bourgeoisie in Loyalist territory took hegemony over the war, they have ruled under a military dictatorship). Already the Loyalist bourgeoisie are seeking a compromise with the steadily victorious fascists, and if the latter are willing to pardon them—economically and politically—(we confidently predict the fascists will never pardon the revolutionary workers) then the democratic bourgeoisie will rule under fascism. Ideology, or

the part of both sections of the Spanish bourgeoisie is subordinated to economic interests-the profit motive. When the bourgeoisie differ politically, their difference is one of how to sweat the workers for profits-not shall the workers be sweated!

Having seized the reigns of the government from a rising mass of discontented Spanish workers, the Spanish Loyalist bourgeoisie, who suppressed the news of Franco's arming, who had sabotaged the military struggle against Franco (during the early months of the war), now pursued the war more vigorously than ever, and utilized the workers' hatred of fascism as a means of destroying the other section of the Spanish bourgeoisie, who, in the event of victory would no doubt rule the economic life of the country. Using the negative cry of fight fascism, they turned the workers' eyes away from the class struggle in the rear-the struggle against their masters behind their backs who were whipping them to the front-for what? so the Loyalist bourgeoisie might enslave the whole of Spain. And this war, carried out under the slogan of democracy against fascism, was comparable in its imperialistic content to the world war, another combat fought in name of democracy. Of course, as long as the economic system of capitalism remains there can be no democracy, as long as this system remains, there must always remain master and slave.

The intra-capitalist fight in Spain could only proceed when the class struggle had been suppressed, so that the Spanish capitalist class could carry on their fight for imperialist gains. And only under some sort of fake cry like "destroy fascism" can the capitalist class obtain the workers' support. But some may say: all well and good the bourgeoisie may be fighting for profits, but we are fighting for democracy-therefore we are utilizing the bourgeoisie in our struggle. But from what we have said above this argument must dissolve like sugar dropped in water. The content of the war is an imperialist war-being led and fought in the interests of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie is thus utilizing us. And that very same bourgeoisie which today utilizes us for their own interests, will tomorrow crush us if, again, for their own interests they need to institute fascism. They will allow us to supposedly struggle for democracy as we remain obedient slaves, as long as we forget the class struggle. Thus, this false cloak of democracy is used to further enslave those fighting under the so-called democratic banners. When the class struggle will have reached its heights, then the standard bearers of this bourgeois democracy, those who cry the loudest for it, will openly disavow their adherence to it, and will be intent only upon the utter crushing of the proletariat. Today, the democracies all over the world suppress the greater part of the world's population; the masses of China, India, Puerto Rico, Morocco, etc. feel the whip of democratic slavery.

What are the implications of the false position on this question of democracy and fascism? It is the basis of support of the next world war which the workers will be duped into fighting. The "democratic" nations will claim, and are claiming today, that they are struggling to crush fascism, and will call their imperialist aggression a war of democracy against fascism. What differences will the social-patriots discover between the war now going on in Spain, and a war let us say, between France and Germany? Here the basic similarities of two such wars will cause a logical position to have either a consistent support of both or vice versa. One cannot talk of

supporting the present Spanish conflict and then say that he would not support France against Germany. (Already the Trotzkyites have indicated that their actions will vary against the French government and the German, if these nations go to war. This is an obvious extension of the line of democracy vs. fascism). In both cases, the honeyed phrases of democracy versus fascism will lure the social patriots and the deluded workers in their train. The lessons of Spain on this contemporary question, perhaps the most important one, have produced their faulty students. These people will have to, in the short time that is allotted them, unlearn these lessons if they are not to become supporters of the impending imperialist conflict. Fascism, like bourgeois democracy is part of the capitalist system—the political expression of that decaying economy. Our struggle must be against the economy and not against its individual political forms.

#### ARMY AND THE STATE

The question of Spain involves likewise the question of the army and the state. Those who prosecute the war, must control the army. Those who prosecute the war, must in turn control the state apparatus, unless of course dual power exists, in which case, there is no state to speak of, but a struggle for the maintenance of the old, or the creation of a new one. In Loyalist Spain, at the beginning of the conflict, beside the official government supporters (Civil Guards, Assault Guards etc.) there were independent workers' militia under the control of the various political and trade union organizations (POUM, ANARCHISTS-CNT, FAI, etc.). The independent militia at the front represented the sharp point that the class struggle had reached in the rear. It represented the class struggle manifestations that were very prominent in all of Loyalist Spain. These independent militia received orders, not from the capitalist government, but from the workers' organizations. In order to effectively prosecute the war, the capitalist government—the Popular Front—had to force the dissolution of these independent militia, and put these workers under the complete hegemony of the government—and this could be done only when the class struggle became subordinated to the imperialist conflict. As long as the independent militia existed, so long did the workers threaten the very existence of the capitalist state. The elimination of the militia of the workers could not be destroyed by a frontal attack on the part of the Loyalist capitalist class, since the latter were not strong enough, because this would entail an open civil war against the rear; also, there was a much easier way to accomplish the same thing.

If the class struggle in the rear were liquidated, of necessity, the militia at the front would have to be liquidated; for those political organizations in the rear would become class collaborationist. This would mean that these political organizations would become incorporated within the government, and therefore, the necessity of independent militia would slowly diminish, since now there would be only one authority, capitalist authority. The next step on the part of the capitalist state would be to establish one army, under one command and that command to be directly responsible to the capitalist state.

Concretely, what occurred, was that the class struggle began its liquidation with the entrance into the Popular Front of the POUM and Anarchists, and the simultaneous abandonment of the Anti-Fascist Militia—the workers' embryonic soviets. It became only a matter of time

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then, that the independent militia were finally entirely liquidated and only one army and one command existed at the front—that of the bourgeoisie. This could only be complementary with the subordination of the class struggle in the rear, for the workers' independent militia at the front represented a manifestation of the class struggle. Since the latter was crushed the former had to succumb.

What lessons can be drawn from this aspect of the Spanish conflict? First, we must be cognizant of the fact that the workers must never give up their independent militia, which must be under the control of the Marxist party; this means of course that the class struggle in the rear must always be pushed forward and never sacrificed to bourgeois fakery. Once the independent militia is liquidated, however, and placed under the supreme control of the bourgeois state, we must call for the smashing and breaking up of this army as one of the aspects of the slogan of revolutionary defeatism—the military defeat of "our own" army to facilitate revolution in the rear, which in turn must bring to the surface once again the army of the workers. But independent militia of the workers cannot be created within the framework of the extant bourgeois army, for the army, being under the control of the state, cannot be reformed, but must break away from the control of the state, i.e.; from the war that it is being forced to fight in. The struggle to form an independent workers' militia cannot be created by adding class struggle factors to the present bourgeois army (as the Trotskyites attempted to do by sending international brigades to Spain ostensibly to fight for socialism), for the progress of that army and its content is indissolubly tied up to the nature of the war that is going on, and to the state that is leading that war. And we cannot lead a struggle against the state, i.e.; the class struggle, if we do not work for the military defeat of the army, and then point to the state in the rear as the real enemy of the workers. Thus by aiding in the cracking up of the capitalist army, we prepare the base for the class struggle upon which the structure of an independent militia must once again be built. But that class struggle cannot be advanced by urging for the reform of the army or by calling for the class struggle and not at the same time understanding that it can be only advanced by facilitating the military defeats of the army. The worst error that could be committed would be to urge the continuance of the military struggle which helps to continue the conflict on a non-class struggle axis and aids the government in strengthening its hold over the workers.

Some have resorted to the argument that since those fighting at the front are workers, therefore, it is a worker's army that is fighting Franco, and is being fought in the worker's interests. If we are to reason thus, then we must conclude that all battles in history were battles of the lowly against the privileged. Serfs made up the lord's armies, therefore, we must conclude that the serfs were fighting in their own interests. In the last World War the workers comprised the tremendous majority of those fighting on all fronts; are we then to conclude that these wars were wars in the interests of the workers? In fact, it has always been to the interests of the masters to allow his slaves to do his fighting so that he could further keep them in bondage. What is decisive in all these instances, is not who is fighting but for whom is the war being fought—who is leading that war! That is the only way to decide the content of a struggle between countries on an equal historical plane, or wars within a country. In



Spain although the workers were in the armies of the Loyalist government, nevertheless what determined the character of that war is who leads it, and whose interests? Obviously it was fought in the interests of the bourgeoisie, under their leadership.

The Trotzkyites, Oehlerites, Fieldites, etc., and all those left wing organizations which call for support to the Spanish struggle, at the same time advocate the carrying forth of the class struggle. We cannot stress this point too much, namely, that under the present nature of the war, with independent class struggle wiped out, and the war being carried out under the Spanish capitalist army, the class struggle can only be subordinated, can only be further diminished by the pursuance of this predatory conflict. Only by breaking from this war, only by the employment of revolutionary defeatism, as a step in the advancement of the class struggle, can we ever hope to realize a Soviet Spain. The others who support the Spanish war, no matter the left phrases, must be in a social-patriotic position.

In a future world war, we may see the emergence of Lincoln and Washington Battalions, and even of Lenin and Marx Battalions, used to carry the struggle of the imperialists on to great victories. But these hollow victories as far as the workers are concerned will echo the present Spanish tragedy, where workers are dying for the class enemy-the capitalist class. Not the name of the army, but its content-who is leading it and in whose interests-is it fighting that must be what the workers must be wary of in the wars to come.

#### ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF CAPITALISM

The Spanish war has still another lesson for us. In Spain we see developing a modern trend of capitalist economy-the taking over of production by the state as in Russia, Mexico, etc. Many have become confused on this question, even to the extent of calling Russia a worker's state because of this phenomena. And in Spain because of the nationalization, many have referred to this as a conquest of the revolution, and one of the reasons for the support of the Spanish conflict. Again one must view the content of this phenomenon and not its form. In Spain, although the state has nationalized stocks and bonds, given out to private individuals, receive interests from the surplus value of the workers-this is the capitalist content of the set-up. The state manages the industries in the interests of individual capitalists-the stock and bondholders. This is known as bourgeois nationalization. It represents in capitalism, another stage in its development-a sign of its decay. It being no longer profitable for individuals to run the factories at their own risk and expense, these are given over to the state, which in turn compensates with stocks and bonds, and this forms the capitalist profits.

In Spain, as in Russia, the capitalist might be a state bureaucrat who derives his profit through an enormous salary, again derived from the surplus value that is extracted from the workers. Thus, nationalization of industries forms an empty slogan if it is not backed up by the content of proletarian, and not bourgeois nationalization, which means that the workers control the industries, allowing no profiteering, and that they do not sweat in the interest of a coupon clipper or a state bureaucrat. Spain has provided us with this lesson. Let us learn it and transfer it to the Russian scene and other countries where this occurs.

The Spanish war is, to all intents and purposes, over. Its lessons will never die. If the workers are not to be ensnared in another bath of blood, into acting as cannon fodder, if the workers are to act in

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their own interests, and finally if the only class which is capable of doing it, the working class, is to avert humanity's present drive toward barbarism, these lessons must be indelibly stamped upon its brain. For the fate of civilization lies in the palm of the world proletariat.

STANFORD

To the Pope

Take, then, your paltry Christ,  
Your gentleman God.  
We want the carpenter's son,  
With his saw and hod.

We want the man who loved  
The poor and the oppressed,  
Who hated the Rich man and King  
And the Scribe and the Priest.

We want the Galilean  
Who knew cross and rod.  
It's your "good taste" that prefers  
A bastard "God"!

(From To the "Christians" by Francis Adams)

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